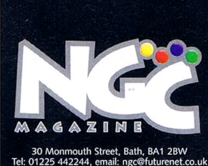


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30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW
Tel: 01225 442244, email: ngc@futurenet.co.uk

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Managing Manager	Tim Weaver
Crony	Mark Green
Crony	Dan Geary
Crony	Justin Webb
Crony	Paul Edwards
Crony	Geraint Evans

Contributors Martin Kitts™, Owens, Mark F. Mitchell, Hanif Saddiq, Jonti Davies, Katharine Lane-Sims, Richie, Collins, Medeiros and Secada

Senior Advertisement Manager	Anne Green
Advertisement Manager	Claire Hawkins
Senior Sales Executives	Phil Jones

International licensing enquiries	Simon Wear Tel: 01225 442244 Fax: 01225 732384 email: simon.wear@futurenet.co.uk
Group Production Manager	Judith Green
Production Manager	Rose Griffiths
Production Co-ordinator	Duncan MacDonald
Ad Design Team Leader	David Matthews
Ad Production Manager	Mel Ward
Ad Production Co-ordinator	Andy Church
Print Services Co-ordinator	Mike Thorne
Print Services Manager	Matthew Parker
Promotions Manager	Gil Stevenson
Marketing and Product Management	Beth Hardy
PR & Publicity	Leah Warwick

Publisher	N. Zacharias Stevens II
Group Publisher	David Maher-Roberts

Fax (editorial) 01225 732341
Fax (advertising) 01225 732282
E-mail ngc@futurenet.co.uk

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Non-executive Chairman Roger Parry
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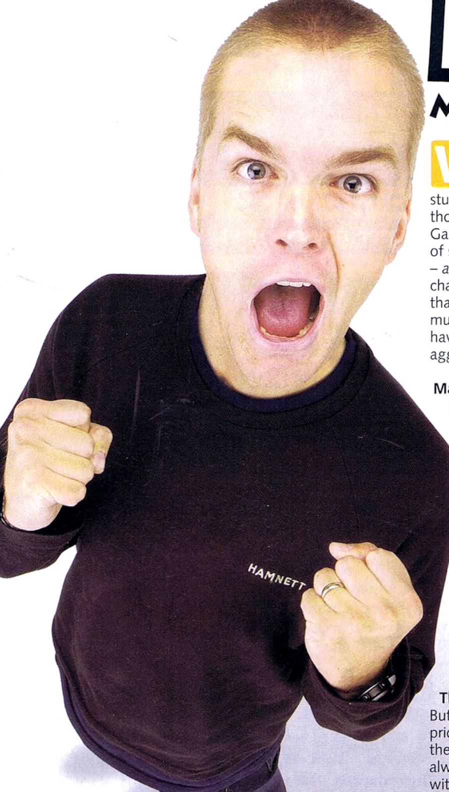
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To find out why it's going to be fantastic, jump to



WELCOME TO





What's that bloke's problem, you're probably wondering. And you'd be right to question the thinking behind pulling that kind of expression *anywhere*, let alone in the photo studio. But, see, the thing is, Nintendo have finally done what we thought they'd never get around to: they've announced a date for Gamecube in the UK. Phew. After what seems like several centuries of sitting around waiting for Nintendo Europe to give us something – *anything* – 3rd May is the day that Nintendo's latest world-changing console will hit the shelves in your nearest town. And that's not the only good news. Wait until you see in Newsdesk how much it's going to cost, and how many launch games it's going to have. It's arriving late, but Nintendo are showing welcome signs of aggression. And, blimey, it's about time they rolled their sleeves up.

Marketing madness

In a stroke of pretty decent fortune, I happened to be in Australia over Christmas. About ten minutes after stepping off the plane in Sydney, I started noticing little green Xs painted on the pavement. A couple of hours later, I was watching a bit of cricket on TV when I noticed huge hoardings advertising Xbox. About two days after that, I was shocked to see a *massive* story in one of the newspapers warbling on about Microsoft's black concrete block. Now, while I'm about as interested in Xbox and its 'You have performed an illegal operation' messages as I am in spending a night out with Jack the Ripper, you can't but fail to be impressed by Microsoft's marketing strategy – and the way they announced Xbox to the world. They've absolutely *blitzed* the entire *globe*. Nintendo, on the other hand, announced Gamecube's arrival in the UK via a webcast that went all wrong and a couple of small adverts in a Dixons catalogue. Not quite the same, is it?

The best console in the world

But, there's still time to get it right, and the unbelievable launch price is a fantastic start, as are the 20 launch games. *Twenty*. That's the largest number of launch games a console's ever had. We've always known it and maybe Nintendo are starting to realise it too: with the right backing, Gamecube could rule the world. Look at the games already on offer and look at the games just over the horizon: *Mario*, *Zelda*, *Turok 4*, *Perfect Dark 2*, *Resident Evil: Biohazard*, *Metroid Prime*. This console is stunning. It's time the world knew it and it's time Nintendo started throwing some money around too.

Tim Weaver
EDITOR

JUST LOOK WHAT WE'VE GOT FOR YOU THIS MONTH!



OUR PROMISE TO YOU

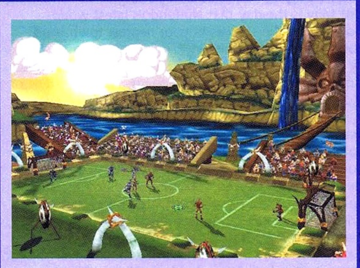
Because we're not tied to Nintendo, only NGC can deliver the most reliable news and reviews first. We answer to no-one except you, the reader, which is why we promise you can trust what you read – every single issue.

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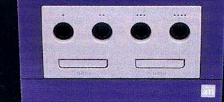
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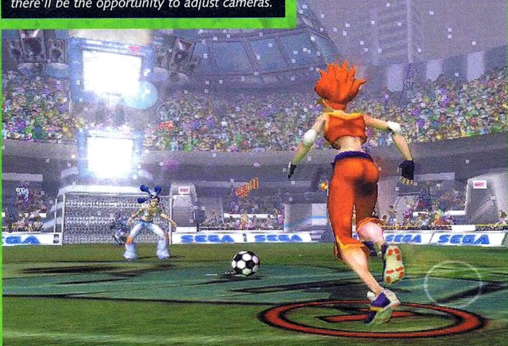


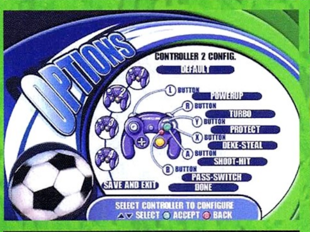

First ever shots of Sega's new Gamecube exclusive!



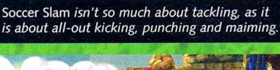
The 'stadiums' are perched in some weird and wonderful places.

Just as in more traditional footie games, there'll be the opportunity to adjust cameras.





The controls are beautifully intuitive – as you'd expect from the people behind Virtua Tennis.



Soccer Slam isn't so much about tackling, as it is about all-out kicking, punching and maiming.



SEGA SOC

INFO BURST

SEGA SOCCER SLAM

DEVELOPER:	V. Concepts
PUBLISHER:	Sega
HOW MANY PLAYERS:	1-4
RUMBLE FUNCTION:	Yes
ONLINE PLAY:	No
NUMBER OF DISCS:	1
GBA LINK-UP:	No

WHEN'S IT OUT?

US	UK	Japan
Spring	TBA	TBA

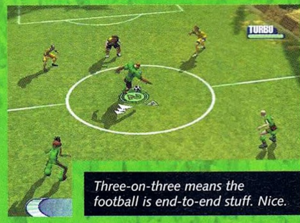
ANTICIPATION RATING

So, here it is! Sega's big surprise for 2002 is *Soccer Slam*, a game we revealed the existence of in last month's news. Okay, so it ain't exactly the *Jet Set Radio* sequel we were all hoping for, but if you really *did* need further proof of Sega's full-on commitment to everything Cubed, then this is it – because *Soccer Slam* is *exclusive* to Nintendo's tiny purple wonder box. Great news, eh?

If you really did need further proof of Sega's full-on commitment to everything Cubed, then this is it.

Being slapped together by Visual Concepts, the Yankee coders behind ace Dreamcast racket-and-ball sim *Virtua Tennis*, *Soccer Slam* is a cunning mix of *Speedball* and *ISS*, with players taking to the field in teams of four to hunt, maim and destroy opponents; though the ultimate aim, as in the real Beautiful Game, is to stick the ball in the back of the onion bag.

The game has five modes: Quick Start, Exhibition, Tournament, Training and Quest, with Quest probably offering the most scope as a kind of 'adventure' mode. Basic moves such as kicking and punching are used to gain possession – and keep it – and, even if the keeper's got the ball in his hands, play isn't necessarily guaranteed to stop – you can always try high-kicking him in the head to nick back the ball. Sound good? Wait until you see some of the



Three-on-three means the football is end-to-end stuff. Nice.

Visually, Soccer Slam is a stonker. Players are chunky and detailed, and as for the stadiums…

CER SLAM

slay the field

power-ups Visual Concepts have got planned. A standout includes the shark-tooth shinpads, which'll snap at your opponents as they attempt to play their way through your three-man defensive unit.

Soccer Slam also has its fair share of graphical whizz-bangery, with magnificent stadiums and fat, beautifully designed players adorned with outrageous costumes and features. Flashy special effects are littered throughout, but there's one take on The Matrix's 'bullet time' where, if you've filled up your power meter by stringing together consecutive passes, you can execute a 'killer kick'. The action slows down, the camera does a 360° spin, and you can pull off a 50-yard piledriver that'll guarantee goalscoring glory about 90 per cent of the time. More soon… NGC

Power-ups are plentiful, such as this Turbo, allowing you to waltz past the full-backs. Neat.



You could say 'those is mad skillz'. Or you could just say they're mad skills.

Fresh platforming from the folks behind *Turok Evolution!*



Look at the definition in his face. Vexx will certainly look the biz.

So, you doubt whether this will be able to take down Mazza? Well, wait until you see some of the ideas in Vexx.

Platforming is combined with some intuitive control, making proceedings feel sooo silky.

Vexxcellent! Our hero gets to wield some pretty devastating magic.

Acclaim have been beavering away on Vexx for months. Ker-razy funsters.

INFO BURST

VEXX

DEVELOPER:	Acclaim
PUBLISHER:	Acclaim
HOW MANY PLAYERS:	1-4
RUMBLE FUNCTION:	Yes
ONLINE PLAY:	No
NUMBER OF DISCS:	1
GBA LINK-UP:	No

WHEN'S IT OUT?

US	UK	Japan
October	TBA	TBA

ANTICIPATION RATING

Mmm, mmm. Look at the level design and then weep at the power of Gamecube.

VEXX

you vexxy thing

The Ice World. Might not sound too inspiring, but just look at it.

Back at last May's E3 show, *Turok* mastermind David Dienstbier tapped us on the shoulder and, grinning wildly, beckoned us into a darkened room. Inside, we were shown something top-secret – a video of Acclaim-Austin's new platforming project on Gamecube, which was tentatively entitled *Jinx*.

Nine months later, *Jinx* has become *Vexx* – and the first screenshots proper reveal a game that's far from just another *Mario* wannabe. Using the same graphics engine as *Turok Evolution* – which we introduced to a gobsmacked world in NGC/64 – *Vexx* promises six gigantic worlds brimming with tip-top running, jumping, enemy-smacking, and a million and one unique gameplay twists.

While *Vexx*'s level themes might sound pretty uninspiring – grassland, ice world, and so on – the sheer *size* of the environments themselves is anything but. They're vast enough to get hopelessly lost in, despite the quality of visuals meaning that wherever you stand in a level, you'll be able to make out its standout landmark – a mountain or cloud-scraping tower – off in the distance. And while there's plenty of familiar platform-hopping action going on, Vexx also gets to fly, swim, and ride jetstreams of air, and even scale walls, Spidey-style, with his oversized claws.

Experimentation is rewarded, as just about any obstacle can be pushed, pulled or tipped over

Acclaim are keen to encourage and reward experimentation. Mess about and you'll uncover the game's most interesting features – such as the way just about any innocent obstacle can be pushed, pulled or tipped over. Some of *Vexx*'s best bits, including a fascinating 2D section accessed by actually leaping *into* a painting, will be tracked down by only the nosiest of players.

As much as it scares us to say it, *Vexx* beats what little we've seen of *Mario Sunshine* so far into a cocked hat. We'll find out whether Acclaim really can take on Nintendo at their own game, and win, over the next few months. NGC



Here's hoping Mario and Zelda get a warmer reception than they did at last year's Spaceworld.

MARIO AND ZELDA ON TRACK

Both games – plus a secret new title – playable at May's E3 show.

By The Green Machine

Shigeru Miyamoto has broken the unnerving silence that's surrounded *Mario Sunshine* and the new *Zelda* game since their unveiling last August, assuring impatient gamers that both titles will "hopefully" be playable at this year's E3 expo.

E3 2002, a trade-only exhibition where the biggest names in games will tout their upcoming wares, is scheduled to kick off in Los Angeles on 22nd May. Such an early playable showing for Gamecube's two most anticipated titles scotches rumours that *Zelda* has reverted back to more realistic visuals in the face of huge public disapproval – that kind of massive U -turn would have set development back months. Similarly, whispers that *Mario Sunshine* has been given the cel-shaded treatment can now be safely ignored.

Mario and Link won't be the only stars attracting big crowds at E3 – Shigsy has also revealed that he's beavering away on a secret Gamecube title, which will also be unveiled at the show. The smart money's on a *Pokémon* game – Nintendo of America's George Harrison (if that *is* his real name) confirmed that a *Pokémon* title for Game Boy Advance, which is sure to link up to a Gamecube stablemate, will be available by the end of 2002. An announcement about online plans is also long overdue – GC/GBA *Pokémon* games that hook up to a Nintendo

This year is crucial to Nintendo – fans won't be happy until they see some results, and fast.





With SSBM doing the rounds and Starfox only round the corner things are looking up.

network would make the ideal start for The Big N's online strategy.

Nintendo's big plans for E3 are seemingly a way of restoring faith after what's being perceived, in the US especially, as a slow few months for the Cube. A Christmas crammed with first-rate games – Nintendo of America claims *Super Smash Bros Melee* sold more copies than any Xbox title during December – has given way to a worryingly quiet release schedule. Only *Eternal Darkness* and *Starfox Adventures: Dinosaur Planet* – both second-party titles now delayed until an unspecified date in late spring – stand out in a sea of third-party ports, and the next Nintendo-developed Gamecube title due for release after *NBA Courtside 2* is... *Mario Sunshine*, not expected until at least summer.

Nintendo "aware"

Hiroshi Yamauchi, President of Nintendo of Japan, is aware of the problems ahead. "Gamecube was designed to offer the highest quality software," he told a Japanese magazine. "The real challenge will be in 2002 when the user expects even better games. At the same time, Nintendo will listen more to users in regards to development of new software. But I am satisfied with early Gamecube sales in Japan, and US sales were stronger than expected."

Although Shigeru Miyamoto's hopes are high for Gamecube – "I expect it to last at least seven or eight years," he told reporters – his stony-faced boss, who's hinting at retirement before this summer, has a more pessimistic outlook for games in general.

"Software is still flooding the market today," Yamauchi said. "But Japanese users aren't buying the same old rehashed games any more. Every game developer is shooting for nothing but realism and flashiness, so we're seeing an overflow of games that look exactly the same. What does realism and flashiness have to do with fun? The industry is hurting for something new that's not an RPG or a fighting game, and developing talent to make new genres takes money."

Mr Yamauchi said he expected only two Gamecube titles to sell a million copies in Japan: *Pikmin* and *Super Smash Bros*. And that prophecy is already coming to pass – one million copies of *Smash Bros Melee* have now been shipped to stores, with 800,000 sold at the time of going to press.

With announcements of new Gamecube games now almost daily, Nintendo are expected to lift the lid on as many as five secret projects between now and E3. **NGC**

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3RD MAY FOR GC!

Yep, Nintendo have announced the launch date for Gamecube in the UK and it's May 3rd. Okay, so it's after everyone else, but who cares when it's only going to cost you £150! *150 quid*, for goodness sake. That's half the price of Xbox and 50 quid cheaper than PS2. Nintendo weren't stopping there either: 20 launch games including at least two big, big surprises – Acclaim's fantastic racing gam, *Burnout* and Activision's *Spiderman* – and a commitment to ensure Gamecube didn't appeal to any age group in particular, but just to gamers in general. So, that means you can expect the likes of the *Resident Evil* series (all five of 'em, remember, are exclusive to Gamecube) and *Eternal Darkness* to sit comfortably in alongside *Luigi's Mansion* and *Pikmin*.

Following hot on the heels of the 3rd May releases are *Super Smash Bros Melee* and *NBA Courtside* on 24th May, and then *Pikmin* on 14th June. The only slight disappointment is that *Eternal Darkness* and *Starfox Adventures* are now pencilled in for third-quarter releases (autumn to you and us). Still, with another 13 third-party games already announced for 2002 (including some mysterious games like *Zoo Cube* and *Cubic Juggler* from Acclaim), as well as *Mario Sunshine*, there's could be as many as 50 Gamecube games available by the beginning of September. Pretty impressive.

"Gamecube will be the first dedicated games console (and) Nintendo will be delivering the largest line-up of games of any platform at launch," Nintendo Europe head David Gosen told **NGC**. "Without doubt, 2002 will be the year of the Cube."

Numbers-wise, Nintendo will be dealing out 500,000 machines across Europe on day one, which'll probably mean about 50 to 80,000 here in the UK. Worry not, though, as they'll be delivering a further one million machines shortly after. By summer time, there'll be enough Gamecubes for everyone who wants one to have one – hopefully. We'll have more – *much* more – next month... **NGC**

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UK LAUNCH GAMES REVEALED

There's going to be a staggering 20 launch titles for Gamecube. Here's the lot: *Luigi's Mansion, Wave Race, Rogue Leader, Sonic 2, Super Monkey Ball, Batman Vengeance, Tony Hawk's 3, Crazy Taxi, Tarzan Untamed, NHL Hitz,* amazing driving title *Burnout, Spiderman, ISS 2, Winter Sports, Dave Mirra, Donald Duck: Quack Attack, Tetris World, Gauntlet Dark Legacy, Universal Studios, FIFA*. **TW**





We doubt very much if Yamauchi will welcome the Final Fantasy sequel machine back so soon.

SQUARE GUNNING FOR GAMECUBE?

Final Fantasy creators join the list of Japanese GC fans.



Looks like Square have got Pikmin-fever too.

Nintendo's old adversaries Square are back in the picture again. Recent remarks from Yoichi Wada, President of Square Co, have had the hearts of Gamecube owners fluttering aplenty, as the prospect of a GC *Final Fantasy* game becomes ever-so-*slightly* more likely.

Mr Wada's comment – "The Nintendo Gamecube is more developer-friendly than PlayStation 2" – might not seem much, but it's the first tangible sign that Square has taken delivery of Gamecube development hardware from The Big N. It's encouraging to see that they're still intent on making the right noises towards Nintendo – Nintendo boss Hiroshi Yamauchi has thrown it back in their faces in recent months, but that doesn't seem to be deterring them.

Square aren't alone in their love for the Cube, either. Software companies and financial experts in Japan are stressing the importance of console diversity in expanding the market – which, in layman's terms, means they'll be supporting Gamecube as a way of breaking Sony's current stranglehold on the videogames scene.

As Keiji Tanaka (MD at Namco) explained to financial analysts Bloomberg, "It's best when two or three console makers co-exist." Allowing one company to dominate (much as Nintendo did a decade ago) gives them free reign to dictate the fees developers have to pay to create their games – a trap third-party developers would hate to see materialise again." Ken Uryu, analyst for Merrill Lynch Japan, explained that "Gamecube will sell *far* better than its predecessor, the N64," a direct result of the fact that "Nintendo is succeeding in luring software developers."

Gamecube's flexible architecture and simple development tools, alongside Yamauchi's recently-established development fund for new game ideas, can only help to ensnare the best third-party talent available.

Let's hope that Square are soon *officially* among them. **GE**

1080° U-TURN

The hugely anticipated *1080° Snowboarding 2*, shown for the first time at Nintendo's Spaceworld show in August before being canned five months later, is now officially back in development.

At least we have SSX to fill the 'boarding gap.

According to **NGC** sources, original *1080° 2* developers Left Field were removed from the project in January, due to creative differences with Nintendo, and they have now had their second-party ties to the Big N severed as well. The snowboarding sequel has now been placed in the hands of another coder – most likely to be Giles Goddard, the man behind the original *1080°* on N64, and who's currently putting the finishing touches to *Doshin the Giant* on Gamecube.

We'll have more on the revived *1080° 2* for you in a couple of issues' time. **MG**

SHORT CUTS



ADIOS ARAKAWA

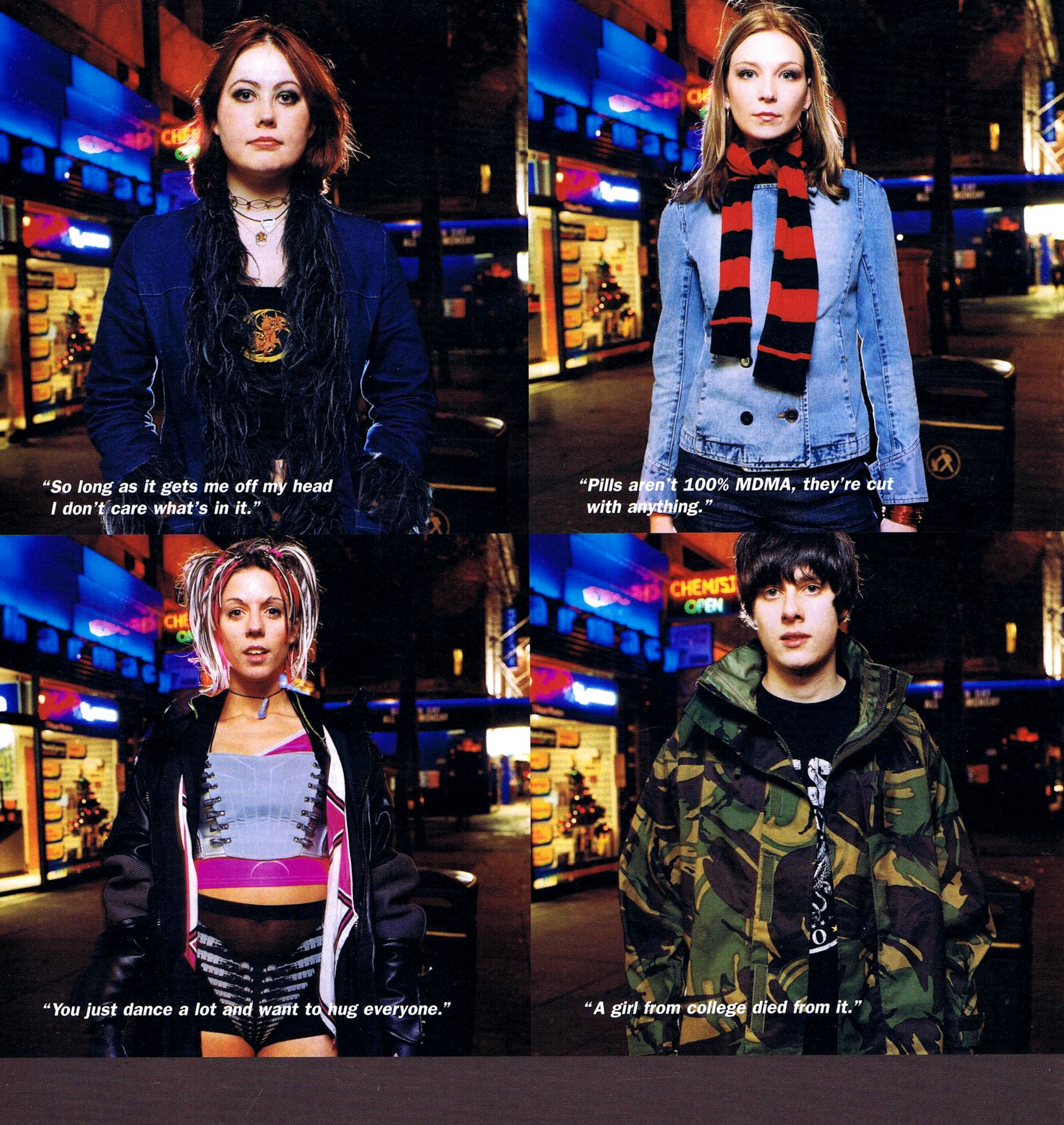
President of Nintendo of America, Minoru Arakawa, is to retire after 22 years at the helm. Arakawa was instrumental in bringing about Nintendo's total dominance of games in the mid-80s, bringing the entire market back from the brink of oblivion in the process. His retirement is a shock, as he was widely tipped to replace Hiroshi Yamauchi as president of Nintendo of Japan.

Mr Tatsumi Kimishima, previously president of Pokémon USA Inc, will be taking on Mr Arakawa's role. **MG**



SEGA TOUCH BASE

Get your game cleats out (whatever that means). Sega are bringing *Home Run KING* – which was previously titled *Major League Baseball 3* – exclusively to Gamecube in March of this year. The MLB-licensed arcadey baseball title will apparently be endorsed by the one and only Jeff Bagwell, "one of the most feared sluggers in the league," and include four play modes – Exhibition, Season, Playoffs, and Home Run Derby – as well as a fully-featured create-a-player mode. We wake you up when it's here. **MG**



One place: Manchester 11:30pm 5th January. One question:

What do you know about ecstasy?

VIRTUAL REALITY

NINTENDO GAMING MOMENTS 'COME TRUE'.

THIS MONTH: Scampering down the side of a tall building, Sonic-style!

THE TEST: Geraint gives the traditional two-fingered Sonic salute, before setting off on his vertical venture.





RESULT: A staggering amount of injury.



Based on the hugely popular animé series in Japan, this is looking an absolute beauty.

It'll even have a GBA adventure to go with it.

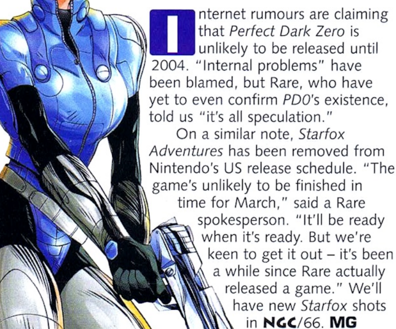
CHINA IN YOUR HANDS

Koei's first Gamecube title is ready for battle.

Koei Japan have announced that they're releasing *Battle Houshin* for Gamecube in March. Based on the Chinese mythology-obsessed animé from Japan, *Battle Houshin* is a sprawling 3D action-adventure with an emphasis on treasure-hunting, spell-casting and fighting stupidly large monsters.

Koei's first Gamecube title to be announced so far, *Battle Houshin* boasts an extensive gaming world and an intriguing geography-influenced battle system where player's tactics, decisions and attacks have to take into account the surrounding environment if they wish to be successful. Not only that, but Koei will also be taking full advantage of Gamecube's GBA connectivity, allowing players to link up to a handheld RPG version of *Battle Houshin*, which itself supports up to four simultaneous players. The mind boggles as to just how all this ambitious cross-platforming and genre-linking will work exactly, but from what we've seen, there'll be a lot more to it than just the item-trading curiosities we've seen from the rest of the Gamecube's GBA connecting titles.

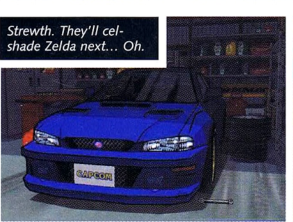
As yet there's no news as to whether or not it'll make the journey to our shores, and with its release coinciding with a certain hotly anticipated survival horror title, it's going to have its work cut out. Fingers crossed. **GE**



DARK DELAYED

Internet rumours are claiming that *Perfect Dark Zero* is unlikely to be released until 2004. "Internal problems" have been blamed, but Rare, who have yet to even confirm *PD0*'s existence, told us "it's all speculation."

On a similar note, *Starfox Adventures* has been removed from Nintendo's US release schedule. "The game's unlikely to be finished in time for March," said a Rare spokesperson. "It'll be ready when it's ready. But we're keen to get it out – it's been a while since Rare actually released a game." We'll have new *Starfox* shots in **NGC**/66. **MG**



Strewth. They'll cel-shade Zelda next... Oh.



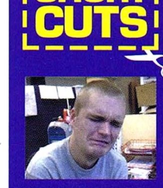
AUTO FOR THE PEOPLE

Sources in Japan have confirmed to **NGC** that Capcom's beautiful PlayStation 2 racer *Auto Modellista* is definitely in development for Gamecube.

Ostensibly an arcadey, *Ridge Racer*-style rubber-burner, *Auto Modellista* uses cel-shading to stunning effect, creating landscapes and vehicles with an other-worldly look that sits somewhere between 2D and 3D. The cars are licensed from real-life – Nissan, Toyota and Mazda are among the makes you can tear around the track in – and online play is a core part of the game. Our source tells us that Capcom are "very keen" to carry the PlayStation 2 version's online racing over to Gamecube.

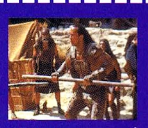
Capcom are rumoured to have another surprise up their sleeves for May's E3 show in Los Angeles – we'll bring you all the news soon. **MG**

SHORT CUTS



EA: EH?

EA have asked us to make clear that there are currently no plans to release *James Bond Agent Under Fire* in Europe, and that as regards shots of the Gamecube version, they, for some reason, "cannot comment". Whatever the hell that means. This comes a month after EA informed us that *SSX Tricky* had not been confirmed for Gamecube on the same day that we took delivery of a finished, boxed copy. Incredible. **MG**



STING IN THE TAIL

The Scorpion King – spin-off movie from The Mummy Returns, which stars The Rock as a (get this) warrior – is to be turned into a GC title for 2002. Developed by Point of View Inc, *The Scorpion King* will feature a heady mix of combat and adventure – just like *Hercules* on the N64. We really can't wait. **MG**



RACING CERTAINTIES

As if Acclaim's *Burnout* and Activision's *Spy Hunter* weren't enough, a US mag has confirmed that the PS2's superb criminal-'em-up *Grand Theft Auto III* will be car-jacking and cop-blasting its way to Gamecube in Autumn. Choice! **MG**


"If you drink a lot with it you're alright."
"People get obsessed with drinking too much water and get ill."
"You may get quite high but the comedown's bad."
"A lot of people say a lot of things about ecstasy, but at the National Drugs Helpline we know the facts."

Analysis of the issues that matter

NEWS PLUS

BAG A GAMECUBE... NOW!

Tired of waiting for Nintendo to bring Gamecube to the UK? There is another way, you know...

And so we wait. Months after Gamecube was plonked in the laps of grateful US and Japanese folks, Europe continues to stare blankly into the middle distance, waiting for Nintendo to *do* something.

But just because Hiroshi Yamauchi can't be bothered to send some Gamecubes winging the UK's way, it doesn't mean you should be denied access to The Best Console Ever Made. There's a thriving import business in Blighty, dedicated to bringing frustrated UK gamers all the foreign consoles and games they can eat. CA Games (0141 334 3901), our favoured importer, can deliver you a Gamecube within a couple of days of you phoning in your order – and it'll play both Japanese *and* US games.

There are pitfalls to importing – not least the cost (around £400 just to get started), and the nightmare of trying to decipher Japanese in-game text. But it's your telly that's the biggest hurdle, as getting a colour picture from Gamecube – or any picture at all – from your humble UK goggle box can be a hit-and-miss affair. Lucky for you, then, that we've compiled this exhaustive Gamecube-importing guide to ease all such pains... **NGC**

WHAT YOU GET

Here's all you need to get Gamecube up and running – this little lot will set you back around £299 from CA Games.



The console, complete with the mod switch that allows you to play both Japanese and US games.



One joypad.



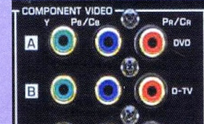
A step-down power converter, which will prevent your Gamecube blowing up when it's plugged into a UK socket.



A composite TV lead (see top right).

CHOOSING A LEAD

Have a look around the front, side and back of your telly and check all the little holes against our guide here.









COMPOSITE LEAD (£10-15)
Recognise these things? Most UK TVs have composite sockets as standard these days – some manufacturers even stick them right on the front of the set so you definitely won't miss 'em. The yellow cable transmits the video signal, the red and white the stereo sound. A composite signal comes as standard with a US Gamecube but if you can afford to do so, an upgrade to SCART or S-Video is a good idea.

DIGITAL LEAD (£40)
Plugs into the Gamecube's DIGITAL OUT slot, and the red, blue and green cables on the other end slot into similarly-coloured composite-style sockets that you'll only find on the most expensive of TVs. Only some games are compatible with this lead – by pressing B as you switch Gamecube on, you can switch titles like Wave Race: Blue Storm to a super-high resolution mode that'll have your eyes popping out of your skull.

SCART LEAD (£15)
Provide a much better picture quality than composite. However, take care, because there are two types of SCART socket – RGB and S-VHS – and if your television claims to be NTSC compatible only through RGB-SCART, then you'll be looking at a black-and-white signal. CA Games should soon be taking delivery of Gamecube RGB-SCART leads, though, which should solve the problem.

S-VIDEO LEAD (£15)
They're a pig to plug in thanks to the delicate pins that bend and break if you even so much as breathe on them, but S-Video gives a pin-sharp, quality picture, and is also most likely to give you that full-screen, technicolour NTSC picture you crave. This is a good bet price-wise too, as you'll most likely be paying the same for composites or a SCART.

NO LEAD AVAILABLE
The RF socket on the back of your TV – the hole that you would normally plug the aerial into – will only become an option when European Gamecubes are (finally) released – NTSC machines don't like RF leads. At all. And even when Gamecube does hit these shores, we'd give RF a wide berth anyway as the picture isn't half as good as SCART or S-Video.

WILL MY TV LIKE GAMECUBE?

European TVs use a display system called PAL, while Japanese and US Gamecubes output a picture in an entirely different format, called NTSC. Theoretically, that should mean you'll only see a black-and-white picture from a foreign Gamecube over here. But, thankfully, most *modern* UK TVs – both full-sized and portable – are compatible with NTSC. Three handy rules:

1. Check your telly's manual, or the manufacturer's website. If it accepts an **NTSC 3.58** signal, Gamecube will work.
2. The 3.58 bit is important, as NTSC 4.43, or simply NTSC-compatible *might* not be enough to get things running.
3. If the TV claims to only accept NTSC through RGB SCART, expect a black-and-white picture.

THE LAST RESORT

If your TV only gives a monochrome picture, and you can't afford a new one, a video signal converter will solve your problems.

1. NTSC-PAL CONVERTER
Cheap, but usually nasty. Your Gamecube's composite leads plug into the box, and another lead coming out of the back – SCART, usually – outputs an *incredibly* blurry colour signal. Needs batteries or a power supply (supplied). Price: around £40.



2. SIGNAL CONVERTER
If the blurriness of the NTSC-PAL converter gets your goat, you can plump for the more professional box from the likes of Sony. The picture will be crystal-clear – but wouldn't it be cheaper just to buy a new TV? Price: from £300 up to – gulp – £2000.



WARNING!
Buying a Japanese or US Gamecube is easy – but remember, you'll be forced to keep revisiting your importer for games, which can set you back anything from £60-100 a throw. Keep in mind too, that you won't be able to play European games on an NTSC machine – though the flipside is that you'll get to play big releases first as Japan and the US always, *always* get games before us.

INSIDE Q

We've got it! Panasonic's stunning DVD-playing beauty arrives in the NGC office. We put it through its paces and see what it can do.

THE EXTERIOR



The Q has a revolutionary reflective face, constructed of glass. It's dotted with buttons – pretty much all the DVD features you'd need are accessible from the Q's front, plus four pads and two memory cards can be slotted into it Gamecube-style. The disc drive protrudes forth out of the Q's pearly gates.



There's one sure-fire way to make your friends green with envy: just turn the Q on and watch the LCD give you a welcome "Hello". Then pop a Gamecube disc into the Q and stop in astonishment as the word "Gamecube" lights up before your very eyes. Heck, the Q even says "Goodbye" when it's turned off.



The Q boasts a rather impressive disc tray that's large enough to accommodate DVDs, VCDs, CDs and, thanks to an inner rim, Gamecube games like our very own copy of Pikmin. As you can see, both Nintendo's proprietary media and standard discs fit comfortably, and thankfully it's sturdily constructed.

THE SOCKETS

Here we have the Q's twin phono outputs. One set could be used to take an audio signal to your TV, the other to a stereo. Decisions, decisions.



If your telly isn't all that flash, then you'll want to use one of these two sockets. The yellow jack outputs a composite signal while the black spider-like socket carries an S-Video picture. Both are used in tandem with the audio outputs above.

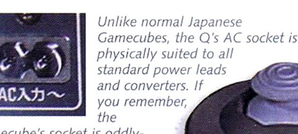


For owners of high-end TVs, this Digital AV-out socket can give you an extra-sharp picture via either a D-Video or component lead.



Should you want to enjoy DVDs or audio CDs in conjunction with your spanking new amp, then this DTS socket should satisfy your needs.





Unlike normal Japanese Gamecubes, the Q's AC socket is physically suited to all standard power leads and converters. If you remember, the Gamecube's socket is oddly-shaped and specifically designed for Nintendo's own transformer, but not the Q's – look!



This little symbol is the bearer of bad news for would-be importers – the Q plays Region 2 NTSC DVDs only. You may be aware that the UK is also Region 2 – but Region 2 PAL, not NTSC. Makes importing films hard.

UNDER

The Q's underbelly is similar in layout to the Gamecube's, with a couple of notable exceptions.

It's a little foot! The Q, you see, needs stout little legs to stand on. The rubber soles of these little trotters provide ample grip, and that little extra bit of height keeps the Q's belly from being dragged – and, potentially, from being scratched.

ON TOP

So, what's the 'bridge' bit on top for? Nothing really – it's just for show. Pretty smart, eh?



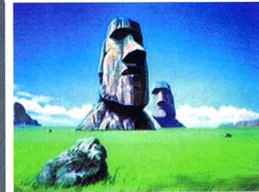
THE DVD PLAYER

The Q plays DVDs, but unlike a certain other console-DVD combo, Panasonic's effort has playback of such quality it's actually worth owning for its movie-playing function. We'd say it's on a par with mid-range DVD players in terms of picture quality.



DTS Dolby Digital support comes as standard on the Q, and with a good surround sound setup you'll be laughing. Well, if you're watching a comedy you will.

There are various camera options. One of these is the ability to cycle through the different angles available on the DVD that you're munching popcorn to.



Virtual Surround Sound is the perfect solution for those without a good home cinema setup – it's a kind of approximation of real Surround Sound. Not the real thing, but pretty good.

THE EXTRAS

DOCUMENTATION

As always with Japanese products, the Q's documentation is first-rate, as well as a little bit mad.

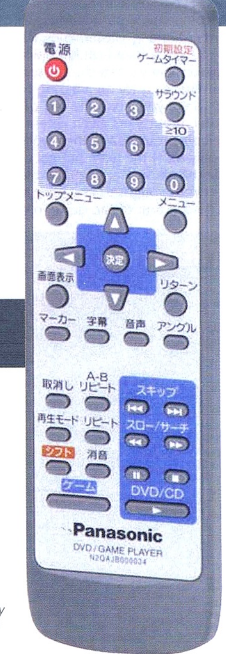


SH-TGC10

Panasonic realise that you need a controller to play games, and with that in mind there's a lovely Panasonic-branded Gamecube pad in the box. It's in a moody shade of grey, it fits in perfectly with the Q's colour scheme, and best of all, there's little chance that you'll meet anyone else with such a controller. Oh, and the codename SH-TGC10 is etched onto its face – very special indeed.

REMOTE CONTROL

A nice extra is the remote control. The button functions are all written in Japanese (funny, that), but the universal symbols associated with features such as Play and Fast-Forward are nice and obvious. Besides accessing DVD-related features with the remote, it's also possible to flick between different modes of Virtual Surround Sound when playing GC games. And when you've had enough, it's okay to stay seated, Homer Simpson-style, and let the remote do the job most gamers rely on their limbs to do—that is, to get up and turn the thing off.



Sponsored by the lovely Acclaim

COMPETITION

WIN!





PLAY TUROK 4 BEFORE ANYONE ELSE!

It's true! You can be one of the first people in the world to play *Turok Evolution* with our extraordinary new competition, put together with dinosaur hunting masterminds, Acclaim.

You and a friend could be whisked off to the company's hi-tech, top-secret offices in Austin, Texas for an amazing two-day tour, where you'll become one of only a handful of outsiders given access to the development team and their work. You'll not only meet the team but get to see inside the game, learning how the *Turok* universe is brought to life. After that, it's on to a guided tour of the Austin compound, which includes state-of-the-art recording studios and gazillions of dollars' worth of hush-hush kit. And then the final act – *playing* Turok 4 *months before anyone else even gets a sniff of the ruddy thing.*

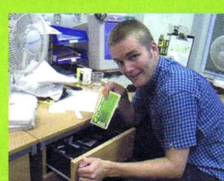
We'll put you up in a swanky hotel and give you some spending money – after you've finished up at Acclaim, you can grab yourself a piece of Austin. Then, after that, we'll jet you up to Los Angeles for two days of fun and games in the home of the stars. We'll even throw in a couple of tickets for a day at Universal Studios, and then the rest of the time is yours to explore the City of Angels. Sound good? Ooooh yeah.



THE RULES

1. The closing date for entries is Wednesday 24th July 2002.
2. The competition is open to all UK residents except employees of The Future Network plc, Acclaim Entertainment, any of its wholly owned subsidiaries, marketing services agencies, handling houses or other companies involved directly with the administration of this compo.
3. All entries must be sent to: I want Turok 'n' roll!, **NGC** *30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. All entries must be sent by prepaid post and received by Wednesday 24th July 2002, irrespective of the date of posting. Proof of posting won't be deemed to be proof of delivery.*
4. Any entry that is incomplete, illegible, late or otherwise does not comply with the rules may be deemed invalid in the sole discretion of **NGC***'s terrifying, silver-tongued Editor.*
5. All entries will be examined. The prize will be awarded to the competitor who has properly completed the entry card as well as correctly answered the tie breaker. If there is more than one correct entry the winner will be the entrant who, in the sole opinion of the panel of judges (well, when we say 'panel', we actually mean the **NGC** *team), has submitted the wittiest response to the tie-breaker.*
6. The panel of judges will be made up of such luminaries as Tim, Greener, Geraint, Paul, Dan and J. Lee.
7. There is no cash alternative to the competition prize. Soz.
8. No purchase is necessary. For an entry card, please write to: Turok 4 form, **NGC** *Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.* **Do not phone us.**
9. The Editor's decision on all matters affecting this competition is final and legally binding. You could say he's in total control. Like the Fonz – only twice as good looking. Heeeey.
10. If an entrant is under the age of 18, he or she must get the permission of a parent or guardian before entering. Also, if the winner is under 18, he or she must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. Please make sure you get the a-okay from the folks before entering.
11. No correspondence will be entered into.
12. The winner of the holiday (and their friend) must be available to fly during the months of August or September. An actual date will be confirmed at the time the winner is contacted.
13. Atmosphere. I love a party with a happy atmosphere.

HOW IT WORKS



DO...
You should have found your air ticket floating around in the bag. KEEP THIS SAFE. Tim, for example, has placed his carefully in a locked drawer. Remember, this ticket will be the only way you can enter our exclusive Turok Evolution compo.



DO...
Cut out the first piece of jigsaw – on this very page – and place it on the first of the six empty spaces on your air ticket. Keep your eyes peeled for five further pieces (which will be much harder to find) in the next five issues of **NGC**.



DON'T...
Rip open your bag, fold the air ticket in two and use it to pick the dirt out of your nails.



DON'T...
Try and use the jigsaw piece as a makeshift stamp with which to reply to your court summons.

A TIMETABLE



NGC/65
With this very issue: your entry card air ticket and your first jigsaw piece.

NGC/66
April – on sale, Friday 8th March
With this issue: the second piece of the jigsaw.

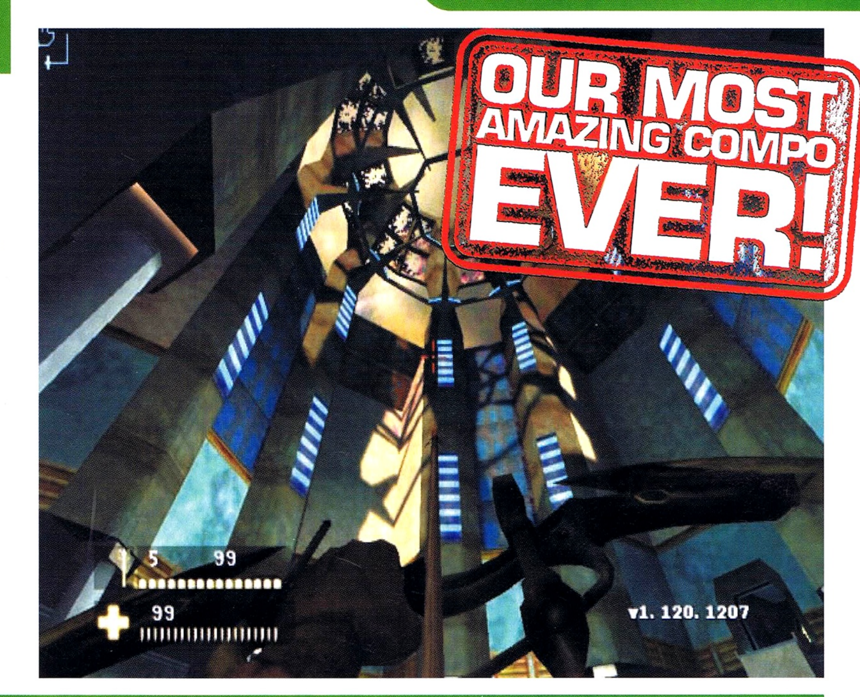
NGC/67
May – on sale, Friday 5th April
With this issue: the third jigsaw piece.

NGC/68
June – on sale, Thursday 2nd May
With this issue: the fourth jigsaw piece.

NGC/69
July – on sale, Wednesday 29th May
With this issue: the fifth jigsaw piece.

NGC/70
August – on sale, Thursday 27th June
With this issue: the last jigsaw piece, as well as a reprint of the entry card for anyone who managed to miss out the first time round.

NGC/71
September – on sale, Wednesday 24th July. Closing date for entries.



Tim and Greener guide you through **NGC**'s brilliant new compo…



DO…
Remember to pick up all five issues of **NGC***, including the August issue (on sale 27th June), where the sixth and final piece will be hidden, enabling you to complete your air ticket. Now, just stick the pieces down with something sticky.*



DO…
Answer the ticklish little tie breaker, to be run in our August issue, before you send in your completed air ticket with all six jigsaw pieces nicely in place.





DON'T…
Have a conversation – lasting several days – with the wall, inadvertently missing the next issue of **NGC**.



DON'T…
Inexplicably fall down nine flights of stairs, breaking your leg.

PIECE #1

The first jigsaw piece! Look out for five others over the coming months…



Updating you on tomorrow's games

COMING SOON

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

FACT BLITZ

1 Ground-breaking 'behind-the-visor' viewpoint, lending a uniquely claustrophobic feel to proceedings.

2 A grotesque menagerie of ETs to blast to bits, plenty of which owe more than a passing nod to Aliens.

3 Terrifyingly large environments, ranging from ruined desert fortresses to moody neon-lit corridors.

4 Wander around in first-person, or roll Samus up into a ball to tear through tight, winding corridors.

KILLER Q

? Which is going to be king of the first-person shooters – *Metroid* or *Perfect Dark Zero*?

Far too early to tell, but with 'internal disputes' at Rare having reportedly put *PDO* back to – get this – *2004*, Retro's game might end up the winner by default. Certainly, the more we see of *Metroid Prime*, the better it looks although blasting away at aliens is never as satisfying as shooting the limbs off human folk. Don't write *Turok Evolution* off, either.

NEW!

Samus' gun seems to change shape slightly in the screenshots here – that's because her weapon is actually an all-purpose shape-shifting blaster that slots straight onto Ms Aran's arm. As you progress through *Metroid Prime*, you'll grab power-ups that'll add another function to your bionic attachment.

ANTICIPATION RATING





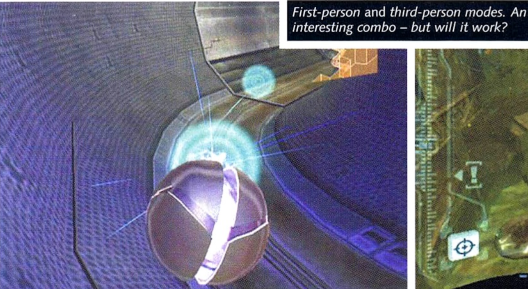

WHEN'S IT OUT?







Nov | TBA | TBA





First-person and third-person modes. An interesting combo – but will it work?

METROID PRIME

Samus through the looking glass.

Finally, the leaks at Retro, the studio responsible for this next-gen update of the classic *Metroid* series, appear to have been plugged – and this smattering of stunning new shots shows that things, fingers crossed, are on track.

These new pics offer our first peek at *Metroid Prime*'s much-trumpeted 'behind-the-visor' view – to ensure you 'get in character' as intergalactic bounty hunter Samus Aran, you're forced to stare at everything through her helmet. It's a striking effect, especially as the screen is littered with all manner of helpful head-up displays – and weather conditions like snow and fog will also cloud your visor and affect visibility.

The visor view makes judging the quality of the game's environments a tricky business – but the crumbling alien structures seem to stretch *miles* into the distance, and the effect of sunlight on the stonework is ace.

At this rate, *Metroid Prime* could surpass even *Perfect Dark Zero*.

We haven't seen much of Samus' enemies yet. Expect gruesome stuff.





ISS 2

It's up for grabs nooooooooooow!

While the less discerning footy fan will be eager to rehearse England's tricky Group F confrontations in whatever uninspiring *FIFA* title EA decide to trot out to tie in with the 2002 World Cup, the rest of us will have our eyes firmly fixed on this – the first Gamecube version of the greatest footy franchise in the world.

ISS 2 on Gamecube will take all the best bits of the consistently staggering N64 versions – flawless controls, silky moves, flowing play and blistering CPU-controlled opponents – and add to them the kind of graphics that'll have you choking in disbelief. Unlike previous European versions of *ISS*, this one features real-life team rosters too – so everything from Seamo's ponytail to Henrik Larsson's world-famous tongue will be recreated in glorious Gamecube-o-vision.

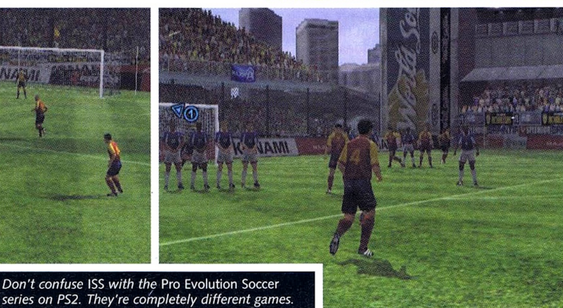
The super-secretive folk at Konami's Japanese studios aren't giving much else away about *ISS 2* – but if the finished version isn't a near-flawless slice of footballing pie, we'll be amazed. More as we get it.



ISS 2 is clever: you don't need on-screen arrows to point you towards your intended target.







Don't confuse ISS with the Pro Evolution Soccer series on PS2. They're completely different games.

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

FACT BLITZ

1 Over 50 international teams, featuring real-life players from the world's top countries. And Wales.

2 A crowd-pleasing line-up of passes, crosses and fancy ball skills – all easily accessible via silky controls.

3 Step onto the hallowed turf of the Olympic Stadium, Barca's Nou Camp, or Lazio's Stadio de Olympico.

4 The return of the splendid Scenario mode, including over 20 mid-match crises to dig your way out of.

NEW!



Previous versions of *ISS* have been too ashamed to give you a good look at their fuzzy stadia – but there's no such bashfulness in *ISS 2*, thanks to the intricately modelled arenas.

RUMOURS

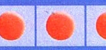
- Rumours suggest the RPG mode in the N64's *ISS Millennium* may return. It was overly long-winded, but it showed plenty of promise.
- There'll be at least two secret 'International All-Stars' teams comprised of the cream of international footballing talent.

KILLER Q

? *ISS* hasn't got the official FIFA license – so how can it be better than EA's games?

Five minutes with any *ISS* game is normally enough to have any sane gamer disowning their copy of *FIFA*. Trouble is, from these shots, *ISS 2* looks to be based heavily on the PlayStation 2's first *ISS* game, which despite being coded by Major A – the folk behind the acclaimed N64 versions – wasn't particularly well-received. Hopefully GC's extra oomph will do it a favour.

ANTICIPATION RATING






WHEN'S IT OUT?





Spring Spring Spring

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

FACT BLITZ

1 *Agent Under Fire* isn't based on any specific Bond flick – it stars a generic 007, previously unseen characters, and set-pieces invented by EA.

2 Shoot men, race cars, drive tanks. Levels are a mix of 3D worlds and on-rails, *Time Crisis*-style ones.

3 Work in conjunction with your beautiful sidekick, Zoe Nightshade, and a variety of other CPU characters.

4 All your favourite bang sticks, from the Wolfram P2K to the SSR4000 sniper rifle, plus plenty of Q gadgets.

KILLER Q

? Admit it – the multiplayer's not going to be a patch on *GoldenEye*'s, is it?

Don't bet on it. There's over 40 weapons – even a jetpack – and a stack of modes. Even better, the GC version will *exclusively* feature CPU-brained bots. Maybe we're starting to like EA after all...

NEW!

Although EA are forbidden from using a 'real' James Bond, the game's star looks unnervingly like Pierce Brosnan. The other characters aren't quite as good, mind – Zoe Nightshade is as ugly as a big bag of spanners.



RUMOURS

- Fully aware of 'the *GoldenEye* factor', EA are really going to town on the multiplayer – don't be surprised if a GC-exclusive map or two turns up.
- The full list of gadgets includes the grapple hook, X-ray specs, watch laser, keypad decoder, and a remotely-viewable spy cam. Neat.

ANTICIPATION RATING







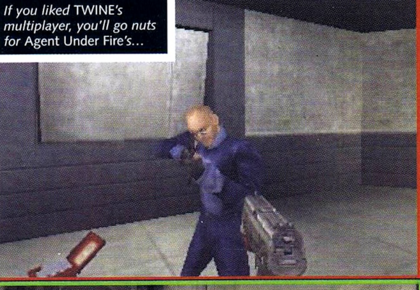
WHEN'S IT OUT?

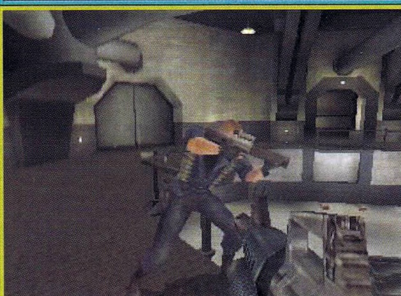




US	UK	Japan
March	Spring	TBA

If you liked TWINE's multiplayer, you'll go nuts for Agent Under Fire's...



JAMES BOND AGENT UNDER FIRE

Now pay attention...

No, Rare had nothing to do with this. Nor did Eurocom, who made a splendid job of the N64's *The World Is Not Enough* in 2000. *James Bond in 007 Agent Under Fire* (aaand breathe) is the work of EA's own in-house coders – so don't expect anything as giddyingly mesmeric as the near-perfect *GoldenEye*.

Still, when this first-person shooter was launched on PlayStation 2 last November, reaction was generally positive. *Agent Under Fire*'s coders might not be allowed to use *any* elements from the 20 movies, but that hasn't stopped them putting together a nicely atmospheric blast-'em-up that marries all-out blasting, high-speed vehicle chases, copious use of Q's ridiculous gadgets, and – hurrah! – a decent dollop of tip-toeing around, plugging brick-headed guards in the legs.

EA aren't shy about lifting ideas from our friends down Twycross way – one section features Bond and his 'female friend' locked in an underground jail cell, while another has you racing around the city streets in a tank. EA's team have apparently cross-pollinated with Eurocom, too, as *TWINE* ideas such as Q's handy grapple hook get a second outing in *Agent Under Fire*. When a fresh idea does crop up, though – such as screaming around the streets of Bucharest in an Aston Martin – it's pulled off remarkably well.

Be here in a couple of months, when we'll find out whether *Agent Under Fire* leaves us shaken, or... ah, forget it.



Stealth is a key feature – but will it be carried off as well as GoldenEye's?






Bomberman's looking better than it did at Spaceworld. A touch better.



BOMBERMAN GENERATION

Has this put the bang back into B-man?

Let's not mince words here: *Bomberman* lost it yonks back. We can vaguely recall having fun with a *Bomberman* game back in, ooh, 1995 – but since then, Hudson have been tinkering, fiddling, and generally making a real pig's ear of a once-successful formula.

The Gamecube-exclusive *Bomberman Generation* is Hudson's latest attempt to put things right. The usually-tedious single-player adventure is still in place, but new features such as element-based bombs, colossal bosses, and genuinely brain-testing puzzles should make bombing your way around the pretty 3D worlds less of a chore. And – thank Hudson's funny little faces – the multiplayer has had the third dimension almost completely stripped away, leaving a maniacal maze-based melee that's much more reminiscent of the world-beating 2D SNES *Bombermans* of the early 90s.

Admittedly, *Bomberman Generation*'s simplistic cel-shading isn't going to send the likes of *Zelda* or even *Cel Damage* scurrying off into a dark corner to sob – but at least Hudson are *trying*, bless 'em. More soon.



Just look at the special effects! Hudson never found the transition to 3D very easy.

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

FACT BLITZ

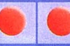
1. Five labyrinthine, cel-shaded worlds and a total of 16 areas to blast and think your way around.
2. New 'element' system gives the bobble-headed star new bombing powers like water, ice, light and wind.
3. Solve simple puzzles – knock down trees to create bridges, melt ice – to make your way through each world.
4. 'Back-to-basics' multiplayer game, featuring 2D top-down mid-maze battling for up to four players.

KILLER Q

? Hudson have finally rediscovered what made the original *Bombermans* fun, have they?

Yep – the gimmick-free multiplayer. Having said that, needless new features like the 'super bomb' are also included.

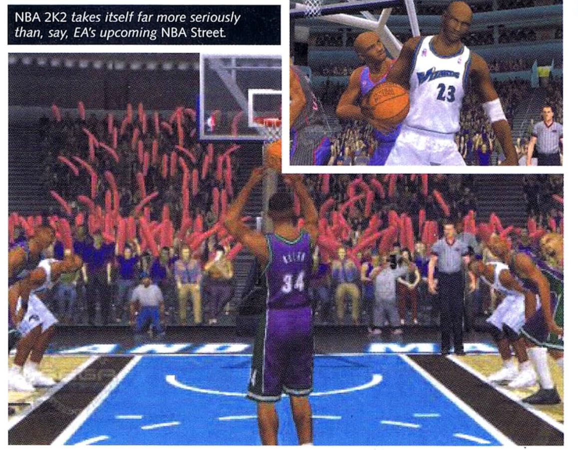
ANTICIPATION RATING




WHEN'S IT OUT?




TBA TBA TBA



NBA 2K2 *takes itself far more seriously than, say, EA's upcoming* NBA Street.

NBA 2K2

Spectacular slam-dunking, Sega-style.

While other Sega divisions rock backwards and forwards in their chairs, grinning unhealthily as they conjure up twin-tailed squirrels and spherical monkey-prisons, Visual Concepts concentrate on the more serious things – such as the US sport they call 'basketball'.

NBA 2K2 first saw the light of day on Dreamcast, where it was greeted with near-universal praise. Stunning animation, unrivalled depth, and scary CPU opponents who actually learn and adapt to your best moves make this one of the greatest sports sims ever – and while it's not the only basketball game with an NBA license, Sega's world-trouncing face-mapping technology gives their digital seven-footers the visual edge.

This is the third version of Sega's *NBA* series so don't expect many Gamecube-exclusive improvements – the tinkers and additions carried out during the series' three-year life have already made *NBA 2K2* all but flawless. Nintendo's own *NBA Courtside 2* has its work cut out.

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

FACT BLITZ

1. Over 2,000 individual animations bring the NBA's best – and worst – players to life in frightening detail.
2. Authentic "Low-post moves" use motion-capture supplied by Rasheed Wallace, one of the NBA's star players.
3. The world's most unnervingly realistic faces – watch as their expressions contort during a particularly tough dunk or tackle.

NEW!

The Dreamcast version of *NBA 2K2* hooked up to Sega's online Dreamarena network. As Sega are kick-starting Gamecube's online capabilities with *Phantasy Star*, it's likely *NBA 2K2* on GC will feature internet play.

ANTICIPATION RATING





WHEN'S IT OUT?





Oct TBA TBA

NGC MAGAZINE ARENA

HOW NGC SCORES A GAME

NGC has one of the toughest scoring systems around. We won't award our Star Game accolade until we're sure you're getting your money's worth.



85 and above Only after playing a game to the end will we consider awarding it our Star Game seal.

84–70 If we award a game more than 70 you can be certain it's fantastic, if flawed, fun.

69–50 Every so often a game comes along that's perfectly playable, but just not special in any way.

49–20 Here you'll find games that were lazily programmed or hurriedly cobbled together – or simply bad ideas.

19–0 The disaster zone. There have been a couple and we've not shied away from giving them a firm kicking.

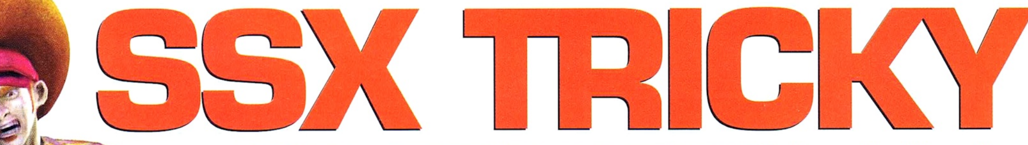
SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE

History arrives as Sonic whizzes into life on a Nintendo console!






GO TO PAGE 28



SSX TRICKY




Icy thrills ahoy as EA's stunt-filled boarding thriller hits GC.

GO TO PAGE 42



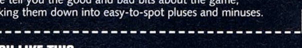
TEAM GC For no good reason that we can think of, the NGC team spot a UFO landing. Don't ask.

IF YOU'RE IN A HURRY

We've tried to provide the most comprehensive reviews around, but if you're in a real hurry, or just can't be bothered to read the full review, you can always just use our Verdict box!



PLUSSES AND MINUSES
These tell you the good and bad bits about the game, breaking them down into easy-to-spot pluses and minuses.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…
There are hundreds and hundreds of games out there – some of which will be similar to the one we're reviewing. This bit helps you seek out another title of the same type. 'If you liked *GoldenEye*, you might also like *Turok 2* or *Quake*'. See?

VISUALS What does the game do with Gamecube's blistering graphical power?

SOUNDS How good are the game's sound effects and music?

MASTERY How well does the game make use of the Gamecube and its incredible hardware?

LIFESPAN Will the game last you for months or a matter of hours?

VERDICT An overall opinion of just how good the game actually is. Plus, of course, a score.

PLUSSES & MINUSES
+
● Cool stuff
–
● Not so cool stuff

IF YOU LIKE THIS…
Pokémon Stadium
NGC/41, 90%
Actually, don't bother if you've got the new one…

9 VISUALS
7 MASTERY
8 SOUNDS
6 LIFESPAN
VERDICT

GERAINT EVANS
Geraint couldn't believe his eyes. "I can't believe my eyes!" he confirmed shortly afterwards.

JUD WEBB
"Anyone like my jumper?"

PAUL EDWARDS
"UFOs? Oh, I've *always* been into extra-curricular activity." You mean extra-terrestrial activity? "Yeah, I do. If extra-terrestrial activity is the one where you get to meet girls."

MARTIN KITTS
"If you look closely, you can see the Alien Death Ray," said Kittsy. "I used that once when I couldn't find my collection of knives made from human toe nails."

JES BICKHAM
Jes was keen to explain how UFOs work. "There's a panel of gorbledees which require fluxation to mark 400-X." Uh huh. "Then you just whack the clutch down, stick it in first and you're off."

TIM WEAVER
Not interested in the UFO, Tim? "I'm too busy to watch a UFO fannying around in the sky for half an hour, you morons… Ooh, that was really green and stringy."

DAN GEARY
Dan was so overwhelmed by the bright light that his neck permenantly froze at 180 degrees. "It has its upsides," he explained. "Now I don't have to look at my shirts."

MARK GREEN
Greener made a concerted effort to look interested, even though his mind was on more important things. "I just can't believe Kym's left Hear'say," he said.





THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE

Can Homer and the gang give *Crazy Taxi* a good old shunting?



GO TO PAGE 36

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS



Imagine the worst theme park ever. Now double it.

GO TO PAGE  41

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002

Acclaim's hi-res hitter returns – any good?



GO TO PAGE 40

Sonic Adventure 2 Battle is only available in the US. If you want to get hold of a copy, ring CA Games on 0141 334 3901

TIME To get the maximum 'A' Rank, you'll want to finish the level as fast as possible, with as many rings as possible. Beating your level times once you've got the hang of each level goes some way to keeping that Sonic disc in your Cube.

SCENERY Looks pretty tasty for the most part. If you're playing as Knuckles, you'll want to use this to your advantage by scaling the walls and digging into them for hidden treasure.

RINGS The more you collect the higher your score. The higher your score the better your rank, and the more lives you receive at the end of the level. If you play as Sonic, you can also use rings as a path to hard-to-reach places via his Ring Dash.

BOUNCERS Great for wanging yourself around the screen and straining your eyeballs. Other treats include air currents that let you flip around in the air and speed strips that send you hurtling around loops.

ENEMIES Destroying these releases little coloured vials. Collect as many as you can, because they'll be transferred to your Chao garden where you can feed them to your little critter to increase its stats.

LIVES We can't quite figure out the point of the lives system any more. Still, the more of these you pick up, the longer you can go before seeing the title screen again. Whoopee-do.

YOUR CHARACTER Choosing either the Hero or Dark side dictates which trio of characters you'll play as. Although their skills are essentially the same, their stories are different.



INFO BURST

SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE

DEVELOPER:	Sonic Team
PUBLISHER:	Sega
PLAYERS:	1-2
MEM CARD SIZE:	11
RUMBLE FUNCTION:	Yes
RUMBLE PAK:	Yes
GBA LINK-UP:	Yes
DISCS:	1
ONLINE PLAY:	No

WHEN'S IT OUT?



US: Now, UK: TBA, Japan: TBA

COST: £50 ($34)

SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE

Sonic speeds in for his Gamecube debut.



Fire up this rocket and it will blast through the cages blocking the way.

Sonic's levels require you to leg it to the end as quickly as possible.

Computer screens give you clues to find treasure.

BOSS HOG

One area *Sonic* has always excelled in is bosses – and *SA2B* is no exception. Whether it's the opening downhill escape from the marauding juggernaut or the standoff against the gigantic – and we do mean *gigantic* – Egg Golem, each is a joy to behold and even more of a joy to figure out and defeat. Also, in a cheeky turn of events, you'll be required to face off with your rival. If you're Sonic you'll have to fight Shadow, and if you're Tails you'll have to go one-on-one with Dr Eggman. While these duels aren't as impressive as the 'proper bosses', they do help to tie the two sides' stories together. Neat.



THE NEED FOR SPEED

SONIC & SHADOW *Both are pretty much identical, apart from their colour. Their levels revolve around doing what they do best – legging it around linear courses as fast as possible.*

ESSENTIAL SKILLS *Both Sonic and Shadow have the ability to smash through boxes, home in on enemies with their spin attack, defy gravity with their Ring Dash, and grind down rails, Hawk-style.*

BEST BIT *The spectacle of hurtling through the smartly designed levels at breakneck speed while being bounced and thrown around by the assortment of speed strips and pinball-style obstacles.*

FUN FACTOR *Not bad – until you realise just how limited your control over Sonic actually is. Unless you know the levels like the back of your hand, the flow of play is frequently interrupted.*

Knuckles' climbing ability is pretty smart, giving some great views.

Finding all the jewels is a tiresome affair.

Tails' levels are probably the best of the bunch.

WHAM BLAM THANK YOU EGGMAN



TAILS & ROBOTNIK *The twin-tailed freak and fat, emerald-obsessed lunatic return. This time they're both tooled up with stompy mech-vehicles armed with cannons and missiles.*

ESSENTIAL SKILLS *Holding down and releasing the B button shoots laser-targeted homing missiles, while tapping it lets off a stream of cannon fire. Both mechs can also hover in mid-air.*

BEST BIT *Stomping through levels and letting off streams of glowing orbs all over the shop. Our fave level sees Tails legging it down a disintegrating motorway trashing cars like a crazy ferret.*

FUN FACTOR *Probably the best of the lot, these. The mechs are great to control and the levels can be pretty demanding at times. Our only gripe is that all the aiming is done for you.*

Sonic Adventure 2 runs very smoothly indeed…

…trouble is, you never really feel in control.

Now here's a turn up for the books. Sega's speedy blue mascot actually appearing on a Nintendo platform would have been unthinkable even two years ago. But the prospect of a Sonic game appearing on a Nintendo console before Mario would have been completely farcical. So, you'd think this stellar gaming event should be a cause for celebration, right?

Erm… well, no actually. Try as we might to like *Sonic Adventure 2*, there's something inherently disappointing about it all. Countless reviews of the highly successful Dreamcast version – and, before that, prequel, *Sonic Adventure* – promised gamers a superbly crafted piece of platforming heaven, inventive, gorgeous and lightning quick. As a result, we were all left wondering as to what *exactly* it was we were missing. The answer, unfortunately, is not much. Don't get us wrong, *Sonic Adventure 2* is by no means awful, but for a game that's been lauded as Sega's Mario we're absolutely flummoxed as to why some people have hailed it as the Dreamcast's finest hour. It *isn't*.

Visually speaking, we can see why the DC owners loved it so much. As you'd expect from Yuji Naka and Sonic Team, it all looks lovely. It's far and away one of the most colourful games we've ever played – the scenery and characters are all very solidly designed, the textures on the surrounding environment are extremely detailed, the bosses are consistently brilliant and, unsurprisingly, the game shifts at alarming speeds without a hint of slowdown – but then, you'd expect nothing less from a *Sonic* game. What we *didn't* expect was the same irritating faults from *Sonic Adventure* to appear in its sequel, and in some cases, the actual exclusion of many of the original's finer points.

Sonic advent-where?

One of the more pleasing aspects of the first *Sonic Adventure* was the so-called Adventure Fields. These were free-roaming sections of the game where Sonic could zip around at his leisure, talk to the inhabitants, raise Chao, find new characters and generally just chill out. From here, you accessed the action stages of the game, all of which were preceded by the opportunity to choose a character. This is no longer the case with *Sonic Adventure 2*, which instead takes a far more linear approach.

Start the main Story mode, then, and you're faced with a choice of two sides – Hero and Dark – each comprising three characters. Each character has a different skill-set, and each level is tailored around their respective skills. For example, Sonic's



FREAK AND UNIQUE

KNUCKLES & ROGUE *Knuckles and Rogue are the treasure hunters of each side. Both are looking for pieces of the Master Emerald – which is a shiny rock inexplicably coveted by woodland creatures.*

ESSENTIAL SKILLS *Quite smart, actually. Both can climb up rock faces and deliver punching combos to enemies, while their double-jump gives them the ability to glide across chasms.*

BEST BIT *Rogue and Knuckles' levels are, for the most part, the nicest-looking of the lot, and have puzzley elements to them. Best of all, you can take time out to explore them at your leisure.*

FUN FACTOR *Unfortunately, these sections can be frustrating and dull. You basically follow clues until your treasure-finding jewel starts flashing. From here on in, it's the age-old 'Hot or Cold' game.*

Quite often, the camera can disorientate you.

Trying to beat your best times is decent ents.

levels are all speed-based, loop-infested jump-a-thons, while Knuckles' stages are far more pedestrian in nature, taking advantage of his wall-climbing and treasure-hunting abilities. You have no choice as to which character you want to use or which level you want to go to, it's simply a case of progressing along the predetermined story path. The only respite you get between each stage is the Chao-raising areas, the mildly impressive cut-scenes, and the utterly lamentable character intermissions, which are, without a doubt, one of the first things that will really start to make your blood boil.

Now, maybe it's just us, but *SA2B* – like *Sonic Adventure* before it – has the most rancid and wildly inappropriate soundtrack you're *ever* likely to hear. From the sub-standard German-style soft rock to wailing female vocals and lame-as-you-like hip-hop efforts, it's safe to say it can all be filed away under 'utter crud'. The only saving grace is that it goes some way to drowning out the most laughable voice acting and thoroughly putrid dialogue we've ever heard in a videogame. Both Sonic and Tails need a visit from Rolf Harris' Animal Hospital to have their vocal cords torn out and replaced immediately. Disgraceful.

Control calamity

Okay, so maybe we're overreacting a little, but considering that this is supposed to be one of Sega's best-loved and respected franchises, you'd think they'd take the time to iron out the problems, wouldn't you? Take the camera for example – on Sonic's levels it only points in the direction you're supposed to be headed. You can turn the camera around if you so choose, but the second you try to actually *move* in that direction, the camera will instantly snap back to its original position. Not only will you be mightily irritated by the stubbornness of it all, but it makes exploring completely pointless. Persist, though, and you'll discover that exploring is a completely pointless endeavour anyway. If you want to deviate from the path you can forget it, because nine times out of ten there's an invisible wall stopping you from actually indulging in any off-road, unscripted activities.

Of course, you could argue that this is the whole point of any Sonic game – that having too much to see and do will slow things down and somehow make everything *less* fun. We disagree. Just because it's fast doesn't necessarily mean it's good. More often than not the whole flow of your blistering speed is scuppered by hitting walls or enemies and then having to wait for your blue wonder to accelerate again. And once you do get him going, welcome to a fascinating



Some of the levels are very well-designed, with some smart set pieces.



Another of Sonic's push-forward-and-relax levels. Pretty, but disappointing.

Once you've finished a level you can replay it.

CHAO FOR NOW

1 Here you are in the Chao garden. To start off with, you'll have two eggs in there as well as fruit-bearing trees and a GBA-linking port.

2 Pick one of the eggs up and give it a fondle – this is how you hatch it. You could leave it, or just smash it against a wall, but it's best not to.

3 Once the little fella's hatched, you'll have the chance to pet him or feed him. Give him some fruit and watch his stamina slowly improve.

4 Other stats require more work to develop. By killing enemies in the story mode you'll get little vials that can be used for specific stats.

5 By saving the various animals in the game you'll be able to introduce them to your Chao via the garden. This will give them new attributes.

6 There's a kindergarten here, too. Take them to school to learn new skills, buy Chao-altering items on the black market, or get Chao-raising tips.

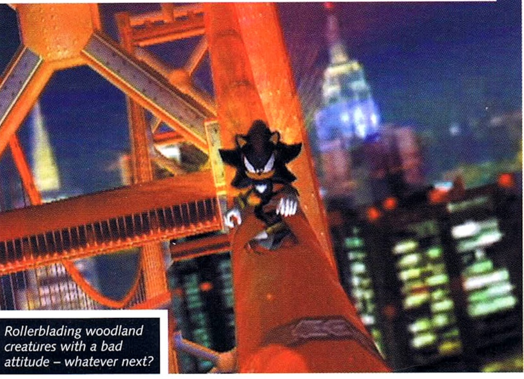
7 Once you're completely satisfied with your Chao's development, it's time to head through the waterfall for some battling and racing.

8 Alternatively, you can go to the giant GBA stand located in the Chao garden, so you can continue your breeding exploits on the handheld. (Have a look at Planet Game Boy, page 52, for more.)


'Me? In a duff game? You've got to be kidding, right? Not, eh?'


Explosions straight from Bomberman 64. Er, nice.


The opening set-piece is a great high-speed start to proceedings.


Rollerblading woodland creatures with a bad attitude – whatever next?



Stomping around as the Eggman is a good laugh.


Nice camera work there, Sonic Team... gnur.

TWO-PLAYER TREATS



ACTION RACE BATTLE *This lets you race head-to-head on levels you've already finished. Choosing either Shadow, Sonic, Amy or Metal Sonic, you simply have to reach the end of the level before your rival. Collecting coins allows you to send a magical attack towards your unsuspecting opponent.*



SHOOTING BATTLE *These range from obstacle races – where you have to get from one end of the arena to the other by blasting though 'mazes' – to one-on-one battles where you batter each others' mechs with homing missiles. Tails, Eggman and a pair of odd-looking mech-riding Chao are selectable combatants.*



TREASURE HUNT RACE *Perhaps the best of the lot. While the one-player version is tedious, the two-player treasure hunt throws in an element that is sorely lacking – tension. You have to leg, fly and climb your way to the booty before your rival – and best of all, you can smack 'em in the chops while you're doing it. Nicely.*



KART RACE *Oh lordy, look what we have here. It's all gone a bit lunchtime code-shop, hasn't it? As nice a thought as it is, it's not exactly the most beautifully executed kart racer – in fact, it's a bit crap, if you ask us. Uninspired tracks and handling like a swine's trotters on frozen puke.*

world of pressing forward on the analogue, with minor adjustments left and right and the odd jump here and there. So no matter how fast you're going, or how 'cool' the loops and twists look, you're not actually controlling much of it. All you get to do is push forward until the rollercoaster stops. Now call us picky, but that's not exactly our idea of great gaming.

The same problem applies to Tails' levels. This time, rather than haring around, he's confined to a mechanical walker. Most of Tails' levels involve stomping about and shooting enemies – fun for a while, but it eventually becomes tedious because you're never actually aiming yourself. You're just waving your stupid laser-sight around while the CPU targets and destroys the enemy for you. The only levels that give you any freedom are the treasure-hunting ones with Knuckles and Rogue – but unfortunately, these just happen to be the most unenjoyable of the lot, as they simply require you to follow clues and an increasingly frantic flashing jewel as you close in on the hidden treasure – not exactly the most inspired premise in the world.

Total hogwash-out?

But for all our grumbling, it's not really *that* bad, and anyone who's mad for a bit of 'hog action won't be totally disappointed by it. In its favour, it is relatively entertaining – in a shallow, arcadey kind of way – and if you can forgive the lack of challenge there's plenty of extra beef here to keep you chewing for some time.

For starters, there's the two-player battle mode that allows you and a friend to out-shoot, out-race and out-treasure-hunt each other over a variety of levels – but if you're expecting games of the same calibre as, say, *Super Monkey Ball* you'll be disappointed. There's also a grading system for each progressively tricky mission on each level that goes some way towards extending *Sonic Adventure 2*'s lifespan – once you've beaten the level in question once, you can play though it again, but with a new objective or mission goal. Also, the addition of a level select for previously completed stages allows you to replay levels at your leisure in order for you to beat your best times and increase your ring quota. Perfecting every facet of the game is very difficult indeed, and of course, it goes without saying that the efforts of hardcore *Sonic* fans will be greatly rewarded.

But still – we can't help feeling that Sonic has perhaps lost his way over the past six years or so and is currently



No amount of crazy camera angles and lense flair can improve this.

Knuckles has to use these ball switches to raise and lower the water level in the mines.

Shadow's levels play the same as Sonic's.

You've finished. And all you did was push Up.

languishing in mediocrity. If this game *didn't* have a certain blue hedgehog in it, and was developed by some entirely different, little-known outfit, we doubt very much that it would have garnered as much praise as it has done.

Suffice it to say, then, that we can only really recommend this to completely die-hard Sonic fans. If you fall into that category then no doubt you'll be a lot more forgiving than we've been. If you're not, then we suggest you find a Dreamcast version in a bargain bin somewhere before you start shelling out for this one.

Don't say we didn't warn you.

GERAINT EVANS

SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE

+

- Visually, a winner.
- Great sense of speed.
- Instantly accessible.
- Staggering wealth of unlockable extras.

–

- Duff camera.
- Excruciatingly shallow gameplay.
- Not enough control over characters.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Super Monkey Ball
Sega
NGC/61 92%
Want to see Sega at their best? Get this in.

8 VISUALS
Very pleasing. Beautifully designed and very fast. Smart.

4 SOUNDS
Nasty rock music and sickening voice-acting. Absolute rubbish.

6 MASTERY
The Dreamcast could easily manage it – the Gamecube can do far, far better.

7 LIFESPAN
If you can look past the obvious failings, there's plenty here to occupy you.

VERDICT
Shallow and ultimately disappointing. If ever there was a game that lorded style over content, this is it.

70

The Simpsons Road Rage is only available in the US. To get hold of a copy, ring CA Games on 0141 334 3901



TRAFFIC *You can batter the oncoming vehicles out of the way, especially if you're driving something as big as Homer's Mr Plow truck. However, some passengers prefer you to drive like a granny.*

CHARACTERS *The only reason anyone would possibly choose this game over Crazy Taxi is to play as characters from The Simpsons, and there are plenty of them here. The more money you collect, the more characters you can use.*

MONEY *The reason you're knackering your car tyres doing all this driving is because you're trying to raise a million dollars to buy Springfield's bus company. Better start saving, then.*

PASSENGERS *Collect the passengers and ferry them to wherever they want to go. It's all there is to do in this game, so you'd better be a big fan of driving around samey cityscapes.*

SPRINGFIELD *The town is split into five areas which you have to unlock by earning money in the one-player game. When you've passed a certain threshold you can choose either a new character or a new area to drive around.*

TOON RENDERING *We're not sure why the developers opted for this brand of solid 3D look, because a flatter visual style (like that used in Zelda) would have been much better suited to the cartoon.*

THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE

Springfield's taxi service leaves something to be desired – as you all too quickly find out.

INFO BURST

THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE

DEVELOPER:	Radical Entertainment
PUBLISHER:	EA
PLAYERS:	1-2
MEMORY CARD SIZE:	4
RUMBLE FUNCTION:	Yes
GBA LINK-UP:	No
DISCS:	1
ONLINE PLAY:	No

WHEN'S IT OUT?

US	UK	Japan
Now	TBA	TBA

COST: $50 (£34)

GIVE ME ROAD RAGE

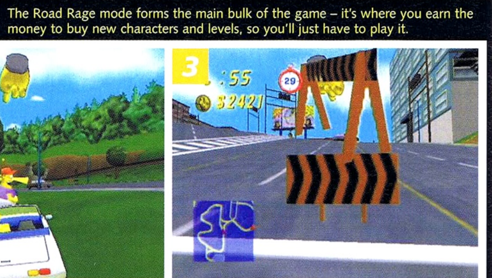
The Road Rage mode forms the main bulk of the game – it's where you earn the money to buy new characters and levels, so you'll just have to play it.



GRAB A PUNTER *If somebody's looking for a ride, a blue cone will pick him out from hundreds of metres away. Just stop within the target area to make the pickup.*



FOLLOW THE ARROW *A pointy finger shows the way to your destination, although it sometimes gets the direction wrong. The scrolling map highlights the route.*



TAKE A SHORT-CUT *There are sometimes short-cuts between buildings, which can be picked out on the map. The easiest way to save time is by ploughing through obstacles.*



DON'T CRASH *While you can hit as many static objects as you like, some passengers offer a bonus if you don't crash into any other cars. There are loads of them to avoid.*



COLLECT THE CASH *When you drop your passenger at the correct spot you'll be rewarded according to how speedy you were, or charged a fine if you were too slow.*



REPEAT TO FADE *Then you do it again and again and again, with the timer running lower and lower each time. Who said games design hasn't kept pace with next-gen technology?*



SUNDAY DRIVER

The main one-player mode is so frantic you barely get a chance to take a look around the brightly coloured streets of Springfield. Luckily for Simpsons sightseers, though, there's a Sunday Driving mode, in which you can take as long as you like to potter around and marvel at how compact the game world looks compared to the actual cartoon.

Perhaps in a few years the legacy of The Simpsons will be the inclusion of the word "Doh!" in the Oxford English Dictionary. Maybe people will remember it as the first sitcom that didn't make them cringe. Heck, it'll probably still be running ten years from now. One thing's for certain, though – nobody's going to look back on it and think 'now there was a source for great videogames'...

Imagine you're a bigwig at Electronic Arts. You've bought the rights to the most consistently brilliant show on TV, but you're uncomfortably aware that almost all of the many previous Simpsons tie-ins have been unmitigated crap. The series simply doesn't lend itself to any obvious gaming genre – you'd probably have more luck trying to make a game based on Friends or Eastenders. You realise that you're for the high jump if you instruct your development team to churn out yet another duffer, so what do you do?

Think about it for a moment. You've got household-name characters to play with – half the world's telly-watching population could probably recite their catchphrases. You've got the city of Springfield, complete with famous landmarks such as the Kwik-E-Mart and the power plant, so you already know what the thing is going to look like. And you've noticed the success enjoyed by a game called *Crazy Taxi*, which features gameplay so ridiculously simple, it could be ripped off wholesale in a fraction of the time it would take to design something totally new, from scratch. If you were a cartoon character right now, there would be dollar signs spinning around in your eyeballs. Ker-ching!



The only Simpsons episode this looks like is the one where Homer went all 'futuristic' and 3D.

Haven't we met...

Simpsons Road Rage bears far more than just a passing resemblance to Sega's original idea – in terms of content, it's almost exactly the same. Amusingly, we've heard

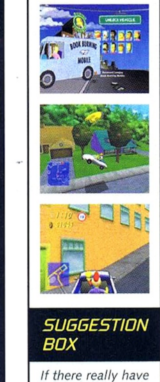


THE SOUND OF GRANDPA

Mission mode is the game's equivalent of the Crazy Box minigames in *Crazy Taxi*, featuring brief challenges to complete against the clock, such as hitting a number of targets or dropping a passenger at a certain location. Each one you finish unlocks the next in a series of ten, and there's a bonus vehicle as a reward at the end. They're not at all engrossing because every time you fail and retry, you have to wait ages for the whole level to be loaded again. There's no reason the game should have to do this, other than sloppy programming.

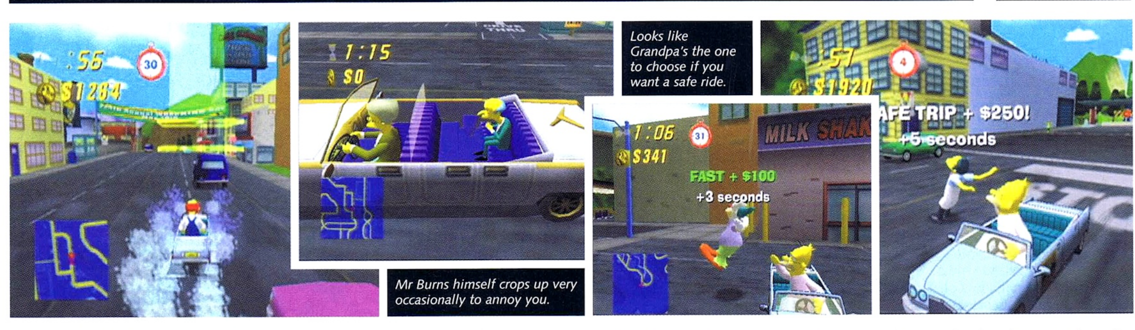
It's a mascot, as seen at the occasional baseball games featured in the TV series.

Fail a mission, then wait more than 30 seconds for the chance to try again. Yawn.



SUGGESTION BOX

If there really have to be more Simpsons titles in the near future, perhaps whoever designs the thing could use scenarios from the cartoon for once, rather than just plonking the characters into any old random game genre. If you'd like to let EA know what you'd love to see in the ultimate Simpsons game, why not send your thoughts to Mailbox (p.82)?



Looks like Grandpa's the one to choose if you want a safe ride.

Mr Burns himself crops up very occasionally to annoy you.

'sources close to EA' absent-mindedly refer to it as *Crazy Taxi* on more than one occasion. Oh well. At least nobody's trying to pull a fast one here.

The aim is to raise one million dollars in order to buy back Springfield's public transport system from the nefarious Mr Burns, who has turned the city's buses into four-wheeled nuclear power generators. This might seem like an impossible task, but when you have a population willing to pay several hundred dollars for a 15-second cab ride (no doubt due to atomic bus-related brain damage), the solution is on every street corner.

With a limited amount of time on the clock, you must race around Springfield in search of people looking for a ride. To make some money, you pick them up and ferry them to wherever they're going – the faster you drive, the more cash you'll collect, and a few more seconds will be added to the timer. That's essentially all there is to it. The skill is in keeping up such a furious pace that the bonus seconds you make cancel out the time you spend driving between pickups, but eventually it all ticks away.

The interaction between the characters you meet is the one thing that distinguishes the game from *Crazy Taxi*. Rather than a bunch of anonymous citizens, the people you pick up in *Road Rage* are the familiar cast of Simpsons regulars, with plenty to chat about. When they hop in the car they have a selection of lines to tell you where they want to go, and depending on which character you're playing as, there's a humorous response from the driver. Certain pairings produce longer, specially recorded exchanges, but most folk just come out with generic snippets of dialogue.

It's pretty funny the first few times, and worthy of the TV show. Sadly, you'll start to notice repeated phrases by only your second or third go. Maybe it's an incentive to unlock more characters and drive further afield in the hope of finding new passengers, but after a while you'll be able to predict exactly what the next joke will be before you've even picked anyone up, and once the humour has expired, the game loses its charm.

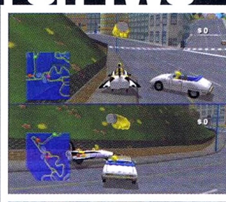
Back to basics

Controls as challenging as *Crazy Taxi*'s or as tight as *Driver*'s would be a significant redeeming feature, but *Road Rage* is nowhere near as much fun to play. The designers were bold enough to borrow the gameplay mechanics from Sega, and you might think it wouldn't have been too much of a liberty to copy the excellent car-handling model as well, but they haven't quite gone far enough. There's nothing like the Crazy Drift move for

Shortcut ahoy! Surprisingly, the passengers actually seem to enjoy this sort of thing.

So how do Lisa's feet reach the pedals? And since when did she drive convertibles?

SIMPSONS FOR TWO







Brilliantly, there's no four-player option in *Simpsons Road Rage*, so the inevitable throng of people jostling to have a go on your copy will sadly have to take turns with the two-player mode. Here, you either have to beat your opponent to the next fare, or try to steal his passenger. In keeping with the standards of the rest of the game, it isn't all that great – if you're after a dose of multiplayer action, you'll probably have a heck of a lot more fun playing for high scores in the one-player game.

expert players here – the only thing your car can do is pull a donut to turn around in tight spaces.

And there are far too many tight spaces in the convoluted *Road Rage* map. The ten-lane highways of *Crazy Taxi* are great for speeding along with that twitchy arcade handling, but *Road Rage* has narrow roads lined with buildings. It means you're always hitting things, sending pedestrians, cars and even trees tumbling through the air in low-gravity free-fall.

Quite apart from the crazy physics, it isn't a particularly convincing recreation of the Simpsons world. The 'toon rendering' technique used doesn't look at all like the cartoon – if anything, it just looks like an ordinary 3D game dressed down with flat, shabby textures. The characters aren't drawn in the same style as the backgrounds, being more like those shiny 3D dummy-style renders you used to see everywhere a few years ago (and still at the start of South Park), which makes for a strange clash of styles. At Spaceworld a couple of years ago, Nintendo boasted that Gamecube's hardware could handle advanced 'toon shading', as seen in the *100 Marios* demo, and later *Zelda*, but the coders of *Road Rage* haven't made use of that ability because it's another straight port of a PS2 title.

If the original *Crazy Taxi* lacked longevity, it's hard to see how a lesser imitator can be anything other than a one-night-wonder on rental. It will take a while longer to unlock every character, and since you can't earn much more than a few thousand each time, you won't be liberating Springfield's buses for at least a few days. But it's highly unlikely you'll spend that much time with it, because once you've been on one taxi run, you've seen the only type of gameplay *Road Rage* is going to serve up for the next one thousand.

MARTIN KITTS

THE SIMPSONS



- Authentic Simpsons voices and dialogue.
- Loads of playable characters.
- Decent soundtrack.



- Spectacularly unoriginal.
- Ugly graphics.
- It's not as good as *Crazy Taxi*

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Crazy Taxi
Sega
NGC/62 81%
The same game with better handling and graphics.





4 VISUALS

Fast and smooth, because Gamecube's graphics chip is barely ticking over.



6 SOUNDS

Great Simpsons voices – well, great until you hear them for the twentieth time, that is.



4 MASTERY

Makes very little use of the potential of either the license or the machine itself.



5 LIFESPAN

Starts out unimpressive and unappetising before getting very old, very quickly.

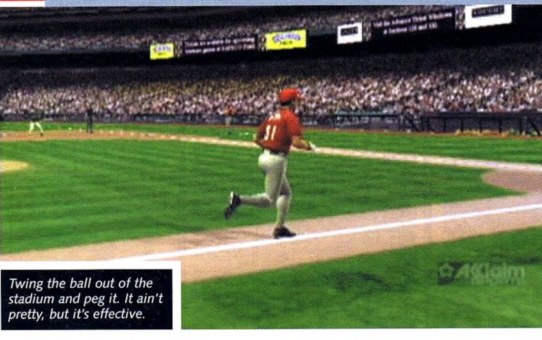
VERDICT

Just the kind of unoriginal, unappetising fare we've come to expect from Simpsons games.

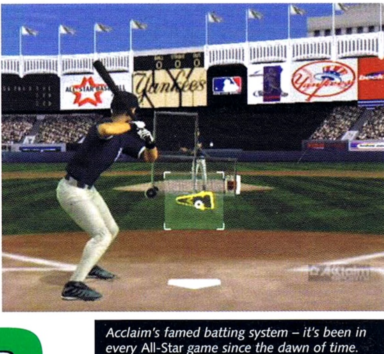


52

All-Star Baseball 2002 is only available in the US. If you want a copy, call CA games on 0141 334 3901



Twing the ball out of the stadium and peg it. It ain't pretty, but it's effective.



Acclaim's famed batting system – it's been in every All-Star game since the dawn of time.



Visually, All-Star hasn't progressed a great deal since its last outing on the N64. Poor show.

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002

Gamecube steps up to bat.

Of all US sports, baseball's reams of statistics and deep-rooted place in American culture render it the most inaccessible to outsiders. But when it's done well, it can still make an atmospheric and enjoyable videogame for us Brits.

Unfortunately, *All-Star Baseball 2002* isn't quite the definitive version of the sport we hoped to see on Gamecube. It hasn't exploited the power of the console, and doesn't really look or play a whole lot better than the hi-res N64 versions (which were, admittedly, impressive at the time).

You'd have to be very familiar with the previous games in the series to spot where the few enhancements have been made. Probably the best addition is the ability to use the C-stick to make subtle adjustments to the angle of the bat, allowing you to knock the ball into the ground or belt it out of the stadium – it's now very easy to make a quick adjustment to the face of the bat right up until the moment the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Player fatigue and injuries have been modelled quite accurately, from the season-long effects of wear and tear on your star pitcher's arm, to the way the computer batter will 'remember' that you deliberately chucked the ball at his face the last time he stepped up to the plate.

Neat little touches aside, the game can feel strangely lifeless at times. Every baseball movie shows the sport as a vibrant, noisy spectacle, but here it often seems like you're playing in a half-empty stadium. The crowd rarely sounds very enthusiastic, and if you were hoping for a game that will make you feel like you're starring in Bull Durham, you might prefer to hang until next year's edition.

All-Star Baseball 2002 is solid, competent and playable, but never spectacular. Gamecube is capable of hosting something that would look as good as a TV broadcast, so the expressionless players and ultra-dark astroturf come as something of a disappointment. Check it out if you're a massive fan of the sport, but if you've got one of the earlier N64 versions, you've already seen most of what this disc has to offer.

MARTIN KITTS



INFO BURST

ALL STAR BASEBALL 2002

DEVELOPER:	Acclaim
PUBLISHER:	Acclaim
PLAYERS:	1-4
MEM CARD PAGES:	59
RUMBLE FUNCTION:	Yes
GBA LINK-UP:	No
NUMBER OF DISCS:	1
ONLINE PLAY:	No

WHEN'S IT OUT?

US: Now — UK: TBA — Japan: TBA

COST: $50 (£34)

OOH, THAT'S GOTTA HURT

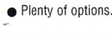
It's a physical sport, so you can expect a few injuries during a game. But when you've got a pitcher with an arm like a slingshot and a grudge against the world, you'd better hope those batters are wearing their boxes...







ALL STAR BASEBALL 2002





+

- Realistic stadiums.
- Plenty of options.

–

- Lacks character.
- Not much better than the N64 versions.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Power Pro Baseball 5
Konami
NGC/17 78%
Big-headed cartoon Japanese baseball.





5 VISUALS
Pretty unspectacular, although the stadiums do look nice.



4 SOUNDS
Boring commentary and monotonous, repetitive crowd noises.

4 MASTERY
Uses the tiniest fraction of Gamecube's potential.



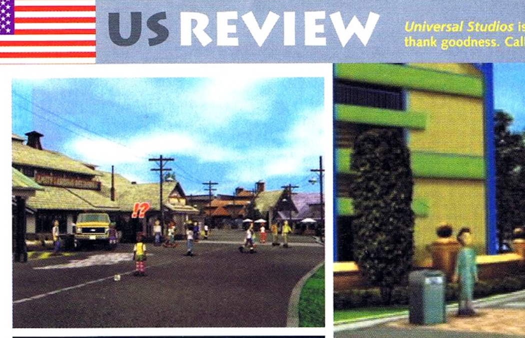
6 LIFESPAN
Only serious baseball addicts will want to take on a full season.



VERDICT
A solid and workmanlike game that doesn't capture much of the atmosphere of the sport.

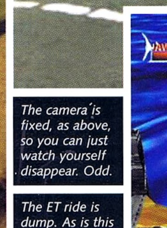
60

Universal Studios is only available on import, thank goodness. Call CA Games on 0141 334 3901.



"What's this? An empty chip packet filled with someone else's spit and food? Give it to me now!"





The camera is fixed, as above, so you can just watch yourself disappear. Odd.



The ET ride is dump. As is this abysmal take on Jaws. Ignore it.



ANDY CAP

For every piece of rubbish you pick up you get $20. Not bad work if you can get it. Anyway, once you've got a decent wad of cash notched up, you can go crazy and spent it on a, er, baseball cap, giving you the opportunity to skip queues and go straight to the rides! Excited? Yeah, nice one.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

You walk, you talk, you die of boredom.

Kemco, previously responsible for the odious Batman of the Future, debut on Gamecube with a commendable attempt at making an entertaining theme park seem like the worst place on earth.

It's difficult to imagine this even looking good on paper, such is the utter hopelessness of *Universal Studios*.

In fact, even after pumping industrial-strength caffeine into your veins, you'll struggle to stay awake past the second or third screen. Aimlessly wandering around what has somehow been turned into the world's most tedious theme park, bumping into people who say things like "This is exciting!" is one thing. Having to collect other people's rubbish and carry out sub-quests like – wait for it – finding someone's missing cellphone, is something altogether more pungent.

The object of the game – if you can call it that – is to make your way around the park's various rides, earning stamps in your Universal Studios pass book when you complete each 'attraction'. Fine in theory, we guess, but in practice, about as enjoyable as a TV channel entirely devoted to Tony Danza.

See, at first, you can't get onto the rides because they're too busy, leading to hours of mind-numbing wandering around with no idea what to do. Then you realise that, in order to be able to afford to buy caps – which allow you access to the rides (don't ask) – you have to rack up points – and that's only possible by collecting point-scoring rubbish – of course! Yep, that's right, rubbish that other people have thrown onto the floor. The more rubbish you collect, the more points you get, and the more rides you can go on. So, what starts out as a confusing, seemingly pointless trot around a dull theme park soon evolves into a straightforward but just as pointless trot around a dull theme park, only now you can complete it in an hour.

Universal Studios isn't appalling, it's just staggeringly boring. On the front of the box it claims to be "A VIP ticket to theme park adventure", but a more apt description would be "A crap day out picking up other people's refuse while being stalked by Woody Woodpecker and his creepy 360° revolving head".

Having said that, while this might not be utterly *hateful*, it's dreary and idiotic enough to warrant smashing it to bits with a hammer.

TIM WEAVER



INFO BURST

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

DEVELOPER:	Kemco
PUBLISHER:	Kemco
PLAYERS:	1
MEM CARD PAGES	1
RUMBLE FUNCTION:	Yes
GBA LINK-UP:	No
NUMBER OF DISCS:	1
ONLINE PLAY:	No

WHEN'S IT OUT?

US: Now · UK: TBA · Japan: Now

COST: $50 (£34)

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

+

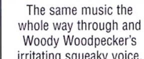
- The quiz section, where you answer film trivia, is a challenge. Though all the questions seem to be about the frankly appalling Twister.

–

- Collecting rubbish.
- The rides.
- The script.
- The game.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Rocket Robot on Wheels
Ubi Soft
NGC/36 88%
Build your own rollercoaster in this magical little platformer.



3 VISUALS

Mostly rubbish. The sort of performance the N64 could have pulled off in its sleep.



2 SOUNDS

The same music the whole way through and Woody Woodpecker's irritating squeaky voice.

1 MASTERY

The rides are about as close to masterful as it gets. If by close, you mean far.



1 LIFESPAN

It'll last a couple of hours if the idea of collecting rubbish doesn't make you cry.

VERDICT

You can't hate it in the same way you hate *Carmageddon* or *Superman*, but this is still an incompetent, uninspired, tear-inducingly tedious jaunt around Woody Woodpecker land.

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SSX Tricky is only available in the US. To get hold of a copy, ring CA Games on 0141 334 3901





SHORT-CUTS *Each of SSX's courses is a mind-meddling maze of short-cuts, alternate routes and secret paths. Smash through one of these glass signs and you'll invariably find yourself on an exciting new track section.*

ADRENALINE METER *Pull tricks and you'll fill this meter up – the higher it goes, the faster you can ride. And if it hits the top, you can execute a barmy Über Trick.*



SPEED *Slopes that verge on the vertical often tip your speedometer over the 100mph mark, lending SSX Tricky an exhilarating sense of speed.*

RIVALS *Challenging without being cheats, your boarding buddies can be smacked in the face with the C-stick – in which case they'll come after you in the next race. Erk!*



TRICKS *Leap off a slope into the ether, then use combinations of L, R, B and the D-pad to grab, spin and somersault your way to big points. Breathtaking.*

0:13.66



INFO BURST

SSX TRICKY

DEVELOPER:	EA Canada
PUBLISHER:	EA Big
PLAYERS:	1-2
MEMORY CARD SIZE:	5
RUMBLE FUNCTION:	Yes
GBA LINK-UP:	No
DISCS:	1
ONLINE PLAY:	No

WHEN'S IT OUT?




COST: £50 ($34)

SSX TRICKY

Hey Tricky, you're so fine...

OPTIC OVERLOAD

The animation doesn't amaze, the scenery isn't anything special – but when you're in motion, *SSX Tricky* brings you some truly spectacular sights.



OOH! AAH! *Someone's thoughtfully placed a whole truckload of fireworks on the trackside next to the biggest jumps. Which means that when you leap into the air, so does an amazing multi-coloured light show.*

GET DOWN *If you can't see beyond the lip of an upcoming ramp, you can bet your day-glo socks that SSX Tricky is about to send your rider on a several-hundred-metre death plunge. Ye-haaaaa! (crunch).*

FUTURE SHOCK *The game's early tracks are fairly sensible – later on, however, you'll unlock mucho mental courses like Tokyo Megaplex here. Do not adjust your eyes – this is how it actually looks.*

TRICK *SSX's bread and butter. If your adrenaline meter nudges the top of the bar, B plus L or R will pull a stunt that ignores about every one of Newton's painfully thought-out laws.*

Tap the C-stick and you can knock your rivals flying. Tee-hee!

Smack the snowflakes in Showoff mode to double your score.

STARS IN THEIR GOBS

EA's planet-sized bank account has allowed SSX Tricky's developers to hire celebrities – heck, real famous people, even – such as David Arquette, Macy Gray, Lucy Liu and Billy Zane to lend their voices to the riders. They're hardly recognisable in-game, but their professionalism means the character's jabberings are at least funny.



ELYSIUM ALPS

The first two courses in *SSX Tricky* are mere warm-ups for this, one of the game's longest and most complex tracks. Let us take you by the hand…



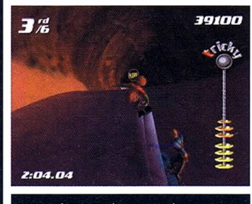
Imagination-free folk will simply race straight for the giant stripey ramps here, which send you flying into the sky for big stunt opportunities.



There's a much better route to the left and right sides – rails half-buried in the powder can be scraped along for a good few hundred metres.



Peel back your peepers, though, and you'll spot a wire in the snow. Grind up and along the grandstands above for a truly spectacular score.



Most of SSX Tricky's tunnels are stashed away in top-secret sections of track, but this one is on the main route. It doesn't look like much from the outside, but the snowy hillocks within provide decent launching ramps for cunning stuntage.

SECRET SHORTCUT! *A suspicious-looking red SSX sign just before the tunnel, you say? Smash through it to bypass the underground section completely.*



All sorts going on here. Ostensibly, it's a long, curved path around the bottom end of the course. Easy…



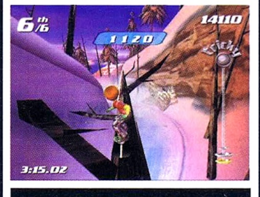
… but if you look to the left, you'll see a long twig that leads off to a separate route entirely.



Grinding points aplenty are available for following the makeshift route that's formed by our wooden friends…

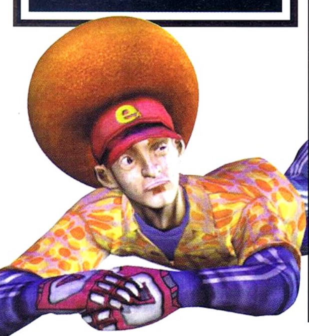


…and if you make it over this chasm, you'll have seen off about a quarter of the course in fifteen seconds. Mint!



A nasty section designed to catch SSX virgins unawares. The drop is all but vertical – but if you keep the board straight, you'll simply clatter into the side of this right-hand turn. Oof!

SECRET SHORTCUT! *There are three different routes criss-crossing this area, and by caressing every twig in sight you'll likely land in at least two.*





There's barely time to acknowledge the starting gun before you're thrown off two giant ramps – the second of which conceals a thousand-foot plunge, ripe for a loooong trick. Leap high enough and you'll find a shortcut in a chasm off to the left.

SECRET SHORTCUT! *The first of this course's many grinds – boost up the rail here and you can soar over your rivals' heads all the way to the first checkpoint.*

Ice coats the racing line through most of SSX Tricky's twistiest sections, allowing you to glide elegantly up and around the turns. The analogue stick's response throughout is spot-on.

SECRET SHORTCUT! *A thin path, then a series of treacherous jumps over platforms that cling to the mountain side, hundreds of metres up. Yikes!*





This is absolute madness. A potentially hassle-free straight run is scuppered by glass walls, which stretch right across the track. The idea is to weave up and down the curved walls on either side – although if an unlucky rider stumbles through a glass pane, it's possible to squeeze through the resulting gap.

SECRET SHORTCUT! *Thank flip! There's a secret rail sitting at the top of the ramp – with which you can bypass the whole glass-filled half-pipe completely.*



The final punishment: a helter-skelter turn that almost always ends with your torn-off skin smeared along its sheer walls. Then it's just a few hops, skips and jumps to a gigantic metal door, which opens to reveal the finish line. Done!





The characters might be instantly forgettable, but the animation's nice.





TOUCHDOWN!

While SSX's stunts are easy to start, finishing them without scraping face against snow isn't so simple. The idea is to let go of the buttons just before you land, but you're after as many points as possible, so it's tempting to leave it to the very last second.

WAYS TO PLAY

Out of the box, *SSX Tricky* features just two tracks and four riders. Unlock the rest of the game like this…



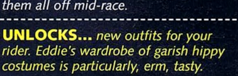
PRACTICE *Self-explanatory. Makes perfect, and so on. Using the Trick Tutorial option, you can swot up on the stunts contained in each rider's Trick Book – a list of moves that earns you big prizes if you can manage to pull them all off mid-race.*

UNLOCKS… *new outfits for your rider. Eddie's wardrobe of garish hippy costumes is particularly, erm, tasty.*



RACE *Pelt it like a mad thing to the finishing line. We're not exactly over-keen on the Championship system, though – race the same track three times in succession to earn your medal. But the courses are so well-designed, we're ready to forgive.*

UNLOCKS… *sparkly new tracks – of which there are ten in all, each more bizarre and hectic than the last.*





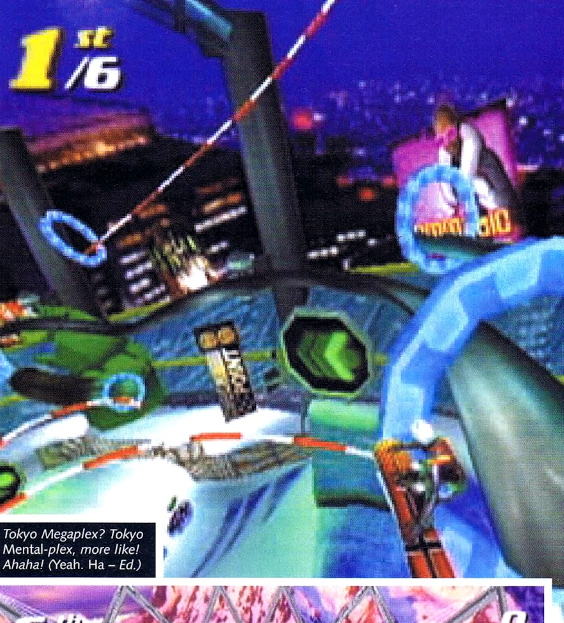
SHOWOFF *No competitors to worry about in this mode, just you, your board, and a points meter in the corner of the screen that gets bumped upwards with every trick you pull. Only a score in the tens of thousands will net you a medal here, though.*

UNLOCKS… *riders – and therefore celebrity voice talent – that you were previously denied access to.*



TIME CHALLENGE *This option only becomes available when you've earned a medal on a particular course. And stunts are equally as important as speed here, because a maxed-out adrenaline meter will give you a lengthy speed boost.*

UNLOCKS… *a warm, fuzzy feeling in your heart as you shave another few milliseconds from your best time.*



Tokyo Megaplex? Tokyo Mental-plex, more like! Ahaha! (Yeah. Ha – Ed.)



Most stunts are performed in mid-air (above), but grinds (right) are worth tons more points.

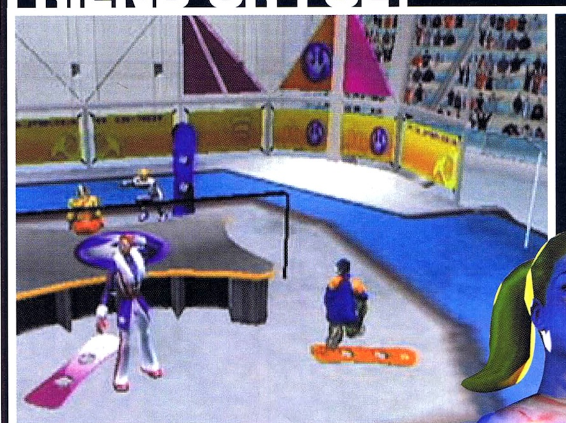
It stands for Snowboard Supercross, it's the unholy hybrid of 1080° Snowboarding and San Francisco Rush 2049 – and it's a game PlayStation 2 owners would much rather have kept to themselves. SSX Tricky is simply one of the most energetic and exhilarating racers we've ever played.

First things first, though – this version of *SSX Tricky* is an unforgivably lazy port. Its visuals barely bring Gamecube out in a sweat, and it features precisely the same level of detail as its PS2 brother – and that's on a console with one tenth of the muscle of Nintendo's purple box. The scenery is often sparse or near non-existent, the character animation is nothing to write home about, and trackside crowds are made up of multi-coloured 2D smudges which jerk up and down using two frames of animation in what we *think* is supposed to be a depressing attempt at cheering. Or maybe some sort of Zulu war dance.

At certain points, when you're careering along a particularly scenery-heavy section of track – say, where a couple of logs and a rock are lying in the snow – the game actually *slows down* as it struggles to cope. *SSX Tricky* arrived on US shelves just days after Gamecube's launch, and the 'quality' of this conversion smacks of EA setting a release date for the game, then locking a handful of virgin coders in a cupboard with a Gamecube development kit and ordering them to get it finished, or else.

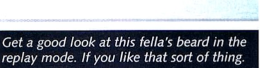
Right. Moan over. Because despite the shoddy coding, the adrenaline-

FRIEND OR FOE?



Like many US developers, EA Canada believe that strong characters are the key to a game's success. Hmm. So *SSX Tricky*'s riders all possess unique personalities, scream at you as they tear down the slopes, and collar you at the finish line for unnervingly-animated conversations about the race. Most importantly, each character alters their allegiance depending on how they're treated in each event – knock them off their board and they'll seek revenge; be nice and they'll leave you be. It all just about works, but even after hours of play only one or two characters proved memorable enough to stick in our heads.





Get a good look at this fella's beard in the replay mode. If you like that sort of thing.



soaked racing that's at the pulsating heart of *SSX Tricky* has survived the journey from PlayStation 2 to Gamecube 99 per cent intact.

The aim of the game is oh-so-simple: race to the bottom of the slopes, pulling off massive stunts to pick up speed and unlock even bigger tricks. But by taking three things guaranteed to make your tummy flutter – super-high jumps, near-vertical plummets, and travelling forward really, *really* fast – and mixing them up mad-style within some of the longest, most complex courses in videogame history, *SSX Tricky* ensures that every race will have your heart pumping.

The trick system is blinding. Press A to launch yourself off a ramp into the ether, then use any combination of the joypad's other buttons to grab, spin, flip and somersault your way through inanely-named stunts such as 'Method Madness' and 'Unethical Experimental'. It's slightly less intuitive than it was on the PS2 – EA have foolishly used the hard-to-reach Z-button as an integral part of many of *SSX*'s trickier stunts – but even the most cack-handed Gamecube owner has little excuse not to be backflipping and 720ing their way down the slopes, especially as grinds and landings are executed almost automatically. Successfully completing an Über Trick – a ker-razy acrobatic stunt that only becomes available when you've linked several common-or-garden tricks together – is an experience to savour.

Ramp it up

Because colossal ramps and 100ft-deep canyons are two-a-penny, you'll often find yourself level with the clouds, somersaulting and twisting as you plummet towards the ground far, far below. At moments like this, the camera angle is pitched perfectly for a genuinely throat-clogging sensation of tumbling towards the earth, and the sound of nothing but the howling wind – and the ecstatic screams of your boarder – makes for a bizarrely realistic feeling of actually falling.

In fact, it's not uncommon to see *SSX Tricky* players twisting and writhing in their chairs throughout a

Do not try this at home. Unpleasantly bloody landing all but guaranteed.

High scores earn your riders extra outfits. None of them are any good.









Merqury City, on the left, is SSX Tricky's longest and most eye-popping track.

HEAD OVER HEELS

When your adrenaline meter hits the 100 per cent mark, *SSX Tricky*'s most outrageous tricks are at your command. Just take a look…

race. There's something about the speed of the game, the way your board reacts to the analogue stick, the sheer number of sharp turns and huge falls, and the constant jostling for position with rival riders, that sucks you right into the telly.

The game's tracks are largely director's cut versions of those seen in the original *SSX*. That's no bad thing – the three-year interval between *SSX*s has given EA the chance to polish the courses to near-perfection. The main route down each 'mountain' is exciting enough, with standout track sections, including a gobsmacking leap over Merqury City's suspension bridge, the endless helter-skelter bends of Elysium Alps, and the perilous suspended rails that snake their way over Tokyo Megaplex. But it's the apparently infinite number of short-cuts and alternate routes that brings every downhill slide alive.

Once you've stumbled on your first short-cut – an icy tunnel secreted behind a smashable SSX sign maybe, or a thin snowy groove that cuts straight across a corner and leads to a heart-stopping drop over jagged rocks – you'll never look back. Half-buried rails carry you to overhead telegraph wires sitting miles above the track, fallen trees form bridges between sheer drops, and acres of snowy wasteland lie hidden off to the sides of the track, just sitting there, waiting to be explored and exploited for faster times and bigger jumps.

The majority of short-cuts are blood-boilingly tough to reach, though and linking together the tricks and jumps you'll need to negotiate several short-cuts in a row – and therefore follow the quickest route down the slopes – usually requires a hundred and one attempts before you finally nail it. But that's why you'll be drawn to *SSX Tricky* like a cat to a ball of string. Tracing a record-shattering route over, across and under the hills, ramps, tunnels and forests – while pulling off the kind of ridiculously over-the-top stunts that are likely to have Shaun Palmer writing in to EA to complain – is frighteningly compulsive.

Cool as you like

But one of the most surprising things about *SSX Tricky* is that it's *cool*. Ever since *Wipeout* hard-housed its way into the affections of the nation's clubbers, every developer and their mum has been signing up design companies, style gurus and any DJ with 'Mix', 'Mad' and 'Beatz' in their name to lend their work some 'cred'.

Thing is, the majority of the resulting games reek of your dad trying to dance to Daniel Bedingfield at a wedding reception. But *SSX*'s combination of professional voice actors, genuinely amusing character jabbering and unusually catchy tunes from artists such as Run DMC and, er, Mix Master Mike gives it an unexpectedly trendy feel. The 'MC' who yells encouragement at you all the way around the track ("That was one phat dope manoeuvre!") is a bit much, admittedly. But EA Canada tread the line between seriously street and knowingly ironic remarkably well, and *SSX*'s sense of humour is a world apart

SHORT AND SWEET

Slide away from the beaten track and you'll encounter some of *SSX Tricky*'s most interesting areas.







ALL MINES *Down a dark, dank hole in Mesablanca – which you'll probably fall down by complete accident – lies this network of underground tunnels, complete with fully-grindable tracks. Claustrophobic!*

WATER RIDE *Grinding is the key to uncovering the game's best short-cuts. Developing your silky analogue stick skills will see you 'walking the tightrope' over this fast-running river high above the Elysium Alps.*

TUBULAR, MAN *If a blue or red SSX sign pops up in the corner of your eye, steer your board straight for it – and smash your way into a secret short-cut, such as this icy tunnel that's hiding somewhere in Garabaldi.*

THRILL GATES *This one isn't technically a short-cut as such, but Tokyo Megaplex's complex system of sliding gates and floor switches can shave entire minutes off your finish time if you treat them the right way.*

The courses are souped-up versions of the ones found in the original SSX. And believe us, they 'rock'.

SSX's scary mouth animation reminds us of the players in EA's FIFA 2002.

from that of excruciating, self-appointed 'comedy' games such as, say, *Gex: Enter The Gecko*.

So, *SSX*'s world isn't quite as irritating as you might expect from something including main character Eddie's hilarious afro, or the manual's insistence that the game is guaranteed to be "coming straight at you". And because the huge number of short-cuts is complemented by a disc's worth of irresistible hidden tricks, outfits and boards, *SSX Tricky* is one of those games that you switch on intending to have a five-minute blast, then still find yourself still staring square-eyed at in the early hours.

SSX Tricky has come a long, long way since we laughed aloud at the first excitement-free screenshots released by EA last September. A little more time spent on taking advantage of Gamecube's super-powerful innards would have made it an all-time classic – but don't let that put you off. Being 'funky' and 'fresh' is one thing, but *SSX Tricky* manages to be downright *fun* on top. Sick!

MARK GREEN

SSX TRICKY



- Impossibly large, amazingly complex courses to race on.
- Tough competitors who rarely cheat.
- Intuitive trick system.



- A fairly shoddy conversion. Cheers, EA.
- Nice fireworks, but the courses are visually unspectacular otherwise.
- Controls can be fiddly.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Crazy Taxi
Sega
NGC/63 81%
Spot-on conversion of elderly adrenaline ride.





6 VISUALS
Not bad, but sparse visuals make it obvious that this was originally a PS game.



8 SOUNDS
Top tunes worthy of cranking the volume up to 11, plus non-irritating character banter.



5 MASTERY
A rushed conversion that's slightly inferior to the original PlayStation 2 version. Hmm.



10 LIFESPAN
No four-player, but the secret routes and extras will keep *SSX* glued firmly in your slot.

VERDICT
Exhilarating racing, sick stunts and masses of exploration, wrapped up in a 'hip' package.

88

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GAME BOY

NEWS, REVIEWS AND TIPS FOR YOUR GAME BOY COLOR, ADVANCE, POCKET, CAMERA AND PRINTER

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE!

JEDI POWER BATTLES

page 56

Better-late-than-never PlayStation conversion makes it to GBA. You feeling excited? Anyone?



POCKET MUSIC



page 55

Create your own bangin' choons with this genius music maker. More inside...

MONSTERS INC.

IT'S OUT IN THE CINEMAS, NOW IT'S ON YOUR GBA!

ALSO!



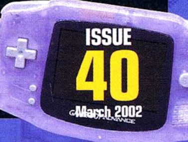
SONIC ADVANCE

HEDGEHOG HEAVEN HITS THE GBA!



PLUS

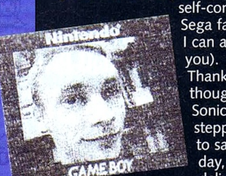
- *Tony Hawk's* on skis! *Mad Trix* gets a going over.
- The GBA gets backlit – find out more inside!
- Pulsating puzzling action in *Broken Sword*!
- GBA tips, Action Replay codes and more...



WELCOME TO PLANET GAME BOY

You're probably sick and tired of me harping on about the merits of 2D gaming – but I don't care, because I'm not going to stop.

If anything, this month has proved my point. After being forced to sit down and work through the often tiresome 3D adventure that is *Sonic Adventure 2 Battle*, I was within a hair's breadth from banishing Sonic from my life for good (not an easy thing for a self-confessed Sega fanatic, I can assure you). Thankfully, though, Sonic Team stepped in to save the day, delivering exactly what I was hoping for – a classic *Sonic* adventure in all its basic, no-nonsense, sprite-based glory. You can find out exactly what we thought of it over the page.



You might also have noticed after reading this month's *Sonic* reviews, our definitive run-down on the GBA-GC link up on page 86 and 87. Yup, we took delivery of about 30 quid's-worth of pure link-up wire, although after a nasty incident involving angry threats of sacking and exposure to Greener's diseased feet, I had to relinquish both my GBA and cable – which means you can now read all about this innovative new feature in this month's Gamecube Lab.

Elsewhere in this month's Planet Game Boy we've news of a brilliant new way of lighting your GBA, Rage's fantastic *Pocket Music*, and a surprisingly addictive multiplayer fighter in the shape of Majesco's *Boxing Fever*.

Geraint Evans, Editor

planet GAME BOY

Planet Game Boy, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW

March 2002

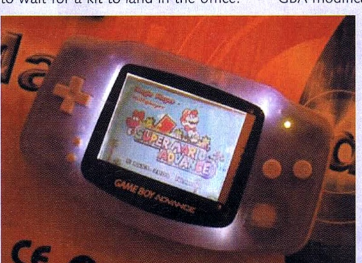
Editor: Geraint Evans

Contributors: Tim Weaver, Greener, Dan Geary, Mark Mitchell, Owens, Hanif Saddiq.

LET THERE BE LIGHT



This has actually been doing the rounds for some time now, but to be perfectly honest, we've given up being patient enough to wait for a kit to land in the office. Still, by all accounts it seems we may not have much longer to wait, as the creator of the project, Adam Curtis, has a patent pending on his unique GBA modification. After three months of "dedicated research and engineering," Adam has managed to create the perfect solution to your GBA viewing problems. Fitting snugly *inside* the GBA, it doesn't actually back-light the screen as such, but frames it in bright white light. As you can see from the shots, it looks like one heck of an effective lighting device, working brilliantly in both total darkness and natural light. The only slight flaw to the plan is that in order to get the modification to work, you'll need to indulge in some screwdriver-based fiddling. Still, Adam assured us that complete instructions will come with the kit once it's been finalised.



We've been busting to get our hands on one of these kits. Hopefully we won't have too long to wait.

Unfortunately there's no firm date as to when you'll be able to get your hands on one, and they certainly won't be available in the shops. Our advice would be to get yourselves over to Adam's website at www.portablemonopoly.com. There you'll find an extensive FAQ about his project as well as a form to subscribe to his mailing list – that way you'll be made aware of any future updates.

MEGAMAN MEGA MIX



For those who just can't get enough of one of Capcom's best-loved heroes, you'll be pleased to hear that not one but *two* new *Megaman* games are on their way. First up is the sequel to the quirky RPG adventure *Megaman EXE* (or *Battle Network* as it was known over here). Featuring the same adventuring and innovative net-battling as before, but boasting a bigger game world and even more battle chips to collect and trade, this will certainly please fans of the original. There's also a brand-new *Megaman*-branded limited edition GBA to be released in conjunction with the game.

The best news, however, is that an entirely new game, *Rockman Zero*, is soon to be released in Japan, and harks back to *Megaman's* original arcade jump-'n'-shoot formula. From what we've seen so far it looks like a pleasing blend of Capcom's own *Strider* and SNK's *Metal Slug* – no complaints there, then.

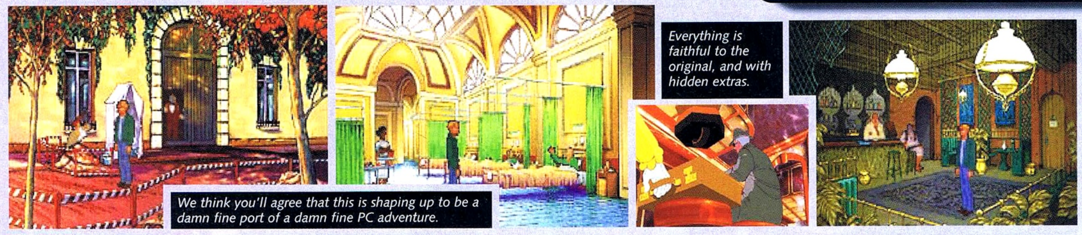


The game that started it all off may eventually get a western release.

FIRE EMBLEM GBA

It's no secret that *Advance Wars* was one of the best games of 2001, earning rave reviews from everyone who played it, so it's great news to hear that the guys responsible – Intelligent Systems – aren't far from releasing the game that started the whole strategy/RPG genre in the first place.

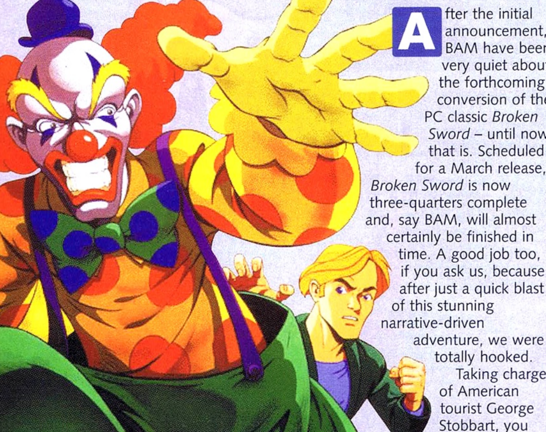
Fire Emblem: The Sealed Sword, has never been released outside Japan, but we're hoping western gamers will soon be able to indulge in this particular strain of super-addictive gaming. Keep your fingers crossed.



Everything is faithful to the original, and with hidden extras.

We think you'll agree that this is shaping up to be a damn fine port of a damn fine PC adventure.

BROKEN SWORD



After the initial announcement, BAM have been very quiet about the forthcoming conversion of the PC classic *Broken Sword* – until now, that is. Scheduled for a March release, *Broken Sword* is now three-quarters complete and, say BAM, will almost certainly be finished in time. A good job too, if you ask us, because after just a quick blast of this stunning narrative-driven adventure, we were totally hooked.

Taking charge of American tourist George Stobbart, you find yourself embroiled in a mystery you must solve, which begins when an accordion-carrying clown nicks some old geezer's briefcase, before blowing up a Parisian cafe. Of course, all is not as it seems, and the ensuing adventure drags you across the globe in what is widely considered to be one of the finest adventures ever conceived.



The cut-scenes from the original have been replaced by some stills to help cut down on the amount of space needed.

So far so good then, and with the tiny GBA milking a massive 64Mb cart, all the environments and characters lose nothing in terms of visual quality. If anything, the GBA version is vastly improved, with abridged dialogue (the original was over-wordy), an improved control, system, and a stunning score – this one should be well worth saving those pennies for.

TONY HAWK'S FOR FOUR!

Oh yeah. This is more like it. The sequel to the outstanding and highly successful *Tony Hawk's 2* for GBA is on its way. Featuring more of, well, *everything*, *THPS3* will include nearly all of the parks from its bigger console brothers, such as Rio, Tokyo, Airport and LA, as well as a fully functional create-a-skater mode.

Still, that's not the most important news – as if answering the prayers of *Hawk's* fans worldwide wasn't enough, developers Vicarious Visions have included a four-player link-up option. Whaddawinner.



At last, the multiplayer games we've all been gagging for.



Ah, happy days. There wasn't a dry seat in the office after we saw these ace antiques.

KONAMI REVIVAL

Now, here's some news that'll bring a tear of nostalgia to your eye. Konami are set to release a compilation of some of their finest retro treats in the form of *Arcade Advance*. There will be six games in total – *Frogger*, *Gyruss*, *Time Pilot*, *Scramble*, *Yie Ar Kung-Fu* and *Rush 'n' Attack* (that's *Green Beret* to you and me). The whole team have fond memories of these golden oldies – and the prospect of indulging in some old-school Amstrad action is great news indeed. But whether or not any of these titles will have stood the test of time, not to mention our hefty rose-tinted spectacles, is another matter entirely.

YOUR ULTIMATE BUYING GUIDE

Five Star Scoring


A simply fantastic game, and an essential purchase.


Well worth a look, this is an excellent title.


Some problems, but almost certainly good fun.


Flawed. Probably not worth bothering with, really.


Utterly lamentable. Avoid like the plague.

SONIC ADVANCE



GBA REVIEW | **From:** Sega **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1-4
Single-cart link up: Yes **Out:** Now (Jap), March (UK)

While Nintendo are *still* refusing to bring us an all-new 2D Mario adventure, fans of 16-bit platforming have at least one reason to rejoice – Sega's all-new *Sonic Advance* has arrived at last, and it's looking and playing exactly as we'd hoped.

If you've ever played Sonic's adventures to death on the Mega Drive, then you're going to be in your element here. From the grassy plains of the now-traditional Hill stages to the pinball-esque Casino stages, everything is in place – so much so, it's almost as though Sonic Team have gone out of their way to bring you that warm, comfortable feeling that comes from playing something pleasantly familiar – and it's worked a treat.


Amy's the highest jumper of the four.

Of course, some may argue that *Sonic Advance* is a bit too formulaic, and in terms of the game's structure it is – nothing has changed on that front. As ever, it's up to Sonic and co to defeat Dr Eggman – in his various mechanised boss guises – by travelling through a selection of themed zones, each comprising of two acts. You can either steam through levels as fast as you can, or painstakingly search every square inch for the entrance to the secret stages where you can grab some elusive Chaos Emeralds. To help you in your quest there are four characters to choose from – Tails (the flying fox), Knuckles (the gliding and climbing echidna), Amy (the hammer-wielding, erm... pink one) and, of course, Sonic (the hedgehog) who we're pleased to announce has regained his 'classic' skills – in particular the 'flash' move that was sorely missing from the DC games. Each character has a surprisingly varied range of moves and subtle nuances that give them far more depth than normal. Sonic himself has some neat little flips and dashes that, although simple, make controlling him far more enjoyable than before.


That's more like it. Same as the Mega Drive originals, but with some tasty GBA polish. Lovely.

The more things change...

So, everything is as it should be. The dazzling array of ramps, trampolines, water-slides, loops and corkscrews are all present, as well as the usual mix of power-ups. Unfortunately, some of the 3D-ish special stages, where you plunge down a tunnel infested with bombs, are spoiled by the awkward perspective that makes accurately collecting rings a right pain in the backside. As a result, you're forced into remembering the position of everything you have to either avoid or collect. Still, this is more than made up for by the superb multiplayer games (one of which is playable with just one cart), the super-cute Chao breeding and battling, and the addictive Time Attack mode.

So, proof that the spiny blue rodent is far better off sticking to his 2D roots – and while it mightn't be the most original Sonic game in recent years, it's a welcome return to form for Sega's mascot and a worthy addition to you GBA collection. Sweet.

4

'LINKIN MARVELLOUS!

If single-player *Sonic* isn't enough for you, Sega have managed to pack in a massive amount of extras for you. First off, there's a single-cart link up option, allowing you and three mates to battle it out for rings in specially designed arenas. A cracking laugh in its own right, you have to hoon it about like a mad thing bashing rings out of your opponents. For a more comprehensive battle mode, though, you'll need to have a cart for every player. On top of that, there's also an addictive Time Trial mode for all the levels you've unlocked, as well as the infamous GC link and Chao-breeding minigame (see PGB News).


Get four to link up for a rollickin' good laugh.

POCKET MUSIC



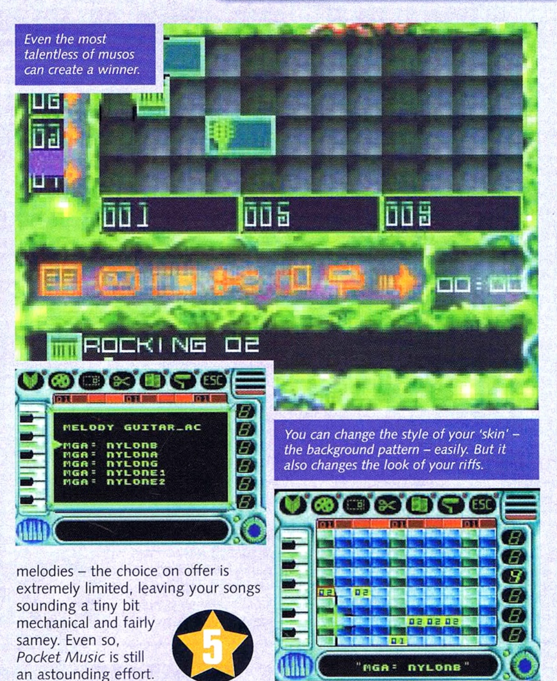
GBA REVIEW | **From:** Codemasters/Jester
Price: £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1-4
Single cart link-up: No **Out:** Now

If you've never played a *Music* game before you've missed out on one of life's great moments. Composing your own anthems using the astonishingly extensive *Music*, or its sequel *Music Generator*, is at least as good as guiding Luigi around a haunted mansion or beating The Rock's face in. The shame of it is, it's never come to a Nintendo machine – until now.

Pocket Music is a sprawling, ingeniously designed songwriting package, admittedly stripped down for its debut on Game Boy, but still so deep you need an Ordnance Survey map to get to the best bits. Choosing from various pre-recorded 'riffs,' you can put a song together in about 20 minutes, but the really good stuff comes when you start writing your own riffs using the Riff Editor. You don't even need to know the foggiest about music – the game does all the hard work for you, leaving you to just construct your masterpiece.

This is a jaw-dropping achievement considering the last *Music* game was on the PS2, and is made all the more remarkable by the fact that you can compose songs on the bus to work in the morning. If we could improve it in just one way, it would be for Jester to include more melodies – the choice on offer is extremely limited, leaving your songs sounding a tiny bit mechanical and fairly samey. Even so, *Pocket Music* is still an astounding effort.

5



Even the most talentless of musos can create a winner.

You can change the style of your 'skin' – the background pattern – easily. But it also changes the look of your riffs.

COLUMNS CROWN



GBA REVIEW | **From:** Sega **Price:** £35
Save: On-cart **Players:** 1-2 **Single cart link-up:** Yes **Out:** Now

Coloured blocks, you say? Tumbling down the screen, are they? And our job's to clear them from the screen by matching up like-coloured bricks?

Which all means that even the innovation-flooded brains at Sega can't resist nicking *Tetris*' best ideas for fast buck-making purposes. This GBA cart is the latest in a long, long, *long* line of *Columns* games, the first of which popped up on 16-bit consoles way back in 1990 – just after the original Russian block-fiddler conquered the world. *Columns Crown*'s play is identical to its forebears – coloured jewels fall down the screen three at a time, and by rotating their order you can create horizontal, vertical and – wait for it – *diagonal* lines of the same colour, which then clear off.

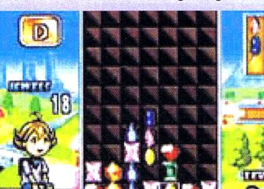
Sounds simple? It isn't. The 'well' is only 11 blocks deep, so you've barely had time to register what colours are in the latest group before they've made themselves comfortable at the bottom of the screen. You'll struggle to clear any blocks at all – not least because the display is unusually dark, the jewels' endless spinning means you can't make out the colours, and the orange and red jewels are barely distinguishable from each other. When the game ramps the speed up to near-illegal levels, after a minute or two your game will invariably be over two seconds later.

Sega have made a stab at lengthening *Columns Crown*'s lifespan with an uninspiring slew of bonus modes – time-limited puzzle modes, two-player battles and the like – but with a main game so painfully unenjoyable, they're fighting a losing battle. After ten years of shoddy *Tetris*-alikes, the Game Boy deserves something better.

1



You'll struggle to clear lines any way at all, in fact.

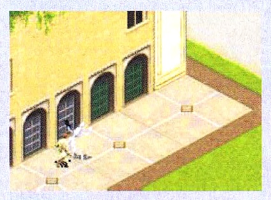




Every line cleared moves the background around a bit. 'Nice'.

JEDI POWER BATTLES

GBA REVIEW | From: THQ **Price:** £35 **Save:** Password
Players: 1 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now



Here we go again. It's another Episode I title that's turned out to be an odious, steaming coil of a game. One of the most frustrating exercises in gaming, ever, *Jedi Power Battles* is so riddled with stupid faults that we wondered whether anyone actually bothered testing it before it was released.

Much like the mediocre DC and PSX versions of the game, it's simply a case of wandering through the levels dispatching wave after wave of identical Federation droids with your light saber. Run, slash, run, slash, jump. And that's it. Now, while this isn't a problem as such, the shoddiness of the mechanics certainly is. Collision detection is diabolical, the platforming sections are *way* too hard because of foolish enemy placement, the perspective is misleading and the controls horribly loose. The final nail in the coffin, though, has to be the great idea of making the game stupidly hard at the beginning – the first level is a real pig, while the rest are comparatively easy. This is mostly down to the fact that the enemies are stupidly simple to defeat. Losing a life is pretty tough – a good job, because you'll lose them all the second you have to try jumping a chasm.

Disappointing, and considering that both the sound and visuals are actually pretty smart, we can't help feeling we've been cheated out of a potentially enjoyable hack-'n'-slasher.

1

The animation is actually pretty sweet. It's just a shame it's wasted on this pap.



The first level is reeeeeal nasty.





Even droideka's don't pose much challenge. It's a case of standing and hammering A.



MONSTERS INC.

GBA REVIEW | From: THQ **Price:** £35 **Save:** Password **Players:** 1 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now

Hardly a surprise, this one. With the Monsters Inc. film raking in the readies as we speak, it falls to THQ to supply us with the obligatory licensed game. It's normally at this point that we launch into a rant about how inherently wretched Disney licenses tend to be – but we're not this time, because *Monsters Inc.* isn't *quite* that bad.

Okay, so if you're over ten years old you won't want to touch this with a broom handle, but for younger fans of the film, this is clean, if relatively uninspired fun. The basic premise is simple, requiring players to scroll from left to right through multi-roomed levels in an attempt to uncover pieces of a broken door so that you can help Boo get back home. Along with the requisite jumping skill, Sulley can also 'scare' the many enemies by roaring at them or by using the 'laugh launcher,' which briefly immobilises enemies with 'fear'.

That's essentially it – not exactly first class, but the chunky visuals and smooth animation combined with 20 levels – each with a random map generator for a different experience each time – will ensure that younger GBA gamers have plenty to get their teeth into. Add to this some high-quality stills and a smattering of diverting minigames and, for once, you have a Disney license that's worth a look – if you're seven.

3



Just wander around the levels, avoiding enemies and seeking out bits of broken door. Great if you're eight.



Younger fans of the flick will probably find this a pretty good version of the film.

BOXING FEVER

GBA REVIEW | **From:** THQ **Price:** £35 **Save:** Password **Players:** 1-2 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now

Nice! There's nothing like pleasant surprises – and this has to rank among the best. We weren't exactly looking forward to this, but since it's arrived it's been something of a hit.

Playing very much like NES brawler *Punch Out*, *Boxing Fever* adds a little more depth, more characters and polishes the whole package with some quite lovely and wonderfully animated characters. The visuals are not only clean and crisp but nice and chunky too, making this one of the most unique-looking – and playing – GBA games we've seen for some time.

Gameplay is simple enough. You look out of the eyes of your chosen boxer, with your fists suspended in front of you. The B-button controls your left fist, the A-button your right, and the shoulder buttons dodge your character in their respective directions. The D-pad itself changes your guard and the height and type of your punches. So it's essentially a case of watching your opponent for openings before delivering a barrage of smack. It's initially tricky, but once you get the hang of things you'll find this highly enjoyable.

In single-player it can get a little repetitive, and you may find it frustrating, but if you can find a friend who's willing to fight with you, then you'll find this to be a quirky and highly addictive multiplayer smackfest. Recommended.

3



The single-player's enjoyable, but it does get repetitive...







...for maximum laughs, you'll need two copies of the game.

DARK ARENA



GBA REVIEW | **From:** THQ **Price:** £35 **Players:** 1-4 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now

After *Doom* and *Ecks vs Sever*, sci-fi shooter *Dark Arena* was always going to have a tough time of it – and unfortunately it doesn't even come close to offering the same kind of thrills as the competition.

The scenery is dull and bland, making for some disorientating level navigation. Weapons are relatively uninspired, the Auto-Map function is frustrating in that you have to find the damn thing first, and the multiplayer, while fairly smooth, isn't a patch on the far superior *EvS*.

All in all, *Dark Arena* just feels too late and too rushed to make any impact on the handheld FPS world, and as such it's very difficult for us to recommend unless you've already exhausted the competition. Sorry...

2





It's okay, but it just pales in comparison to the competition.

ARMY MEN OPERATION GREEN



GBA REVIEW | **From:** 3DO **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart
Players: 1 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** February

The missions vary in name but they all end up feeling exactly the same.



Enemies try to hide behind the fences but they can't stay hidden for long. Ha!

Here's a thought: we reckon, at a rough guess, we've reviewed, oooh, eight Army Men games since PGB's inception. Now, if each one took us, say, a couple of hours to muck around with (maybe less – it depends how patient we're feeling), that's an astonishing 16 hours of life that we've wasted gazing at a 3DO game. Remarkable statistics when you think about it.

Anyway, *Operation Green* is much the same as every other *Army Men* game, except this time there's a stealth mode. Imaginative! In a truly life-changing premise, your job is to wander around 'war-like' levels staving off enemy fire and completing objectives that require no thought whatsoever. It's relentless and uninspired, and only marginally more taxing than tying your shoelaces, though nowhere near as satisfying.

There's been new weaponry added, including vehicles, which adds *something*, but the much-vaunted AI improvement that 3DO were promising is barely noticeable beyond a couple of CPU-controlled soldiers appearing to take partial cover behind a some twigs when start to open fire.

So, on the whole, not worth bothering about. Even if it happened to be free.





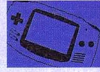
2

There's stacks of enemies to take out – as well as turrets and tanks.



One of Operation Green's claims to fame is the opportunity to drive tanks.

JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX



GBA REVIEW | **From:** 3DO **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart
Players: 1 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now



Stunt ahoy! The Mosester pulls off a spreadeagle. There's a stack of good stunts hidden away in the lad's locker.



Considering some of the tat 3D0 have unleashed upon an unwitting public over the past couple of years, *Jonny Moseley Mad Trix* isn't actually that bad. Ripping off *Tony Hawk's* but setting the action on skis has created a game that's moderately enjoyable.

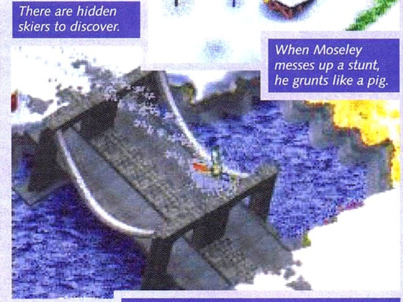
Inevitably, though, there's one slight flaw to the plan: Moseley and his 'mad trix' also come bundled with a truly terrible control system – two times over. With the game being viewed from a side-on perspective logic would dictate that pressing Up sends you left, while a little nudge of Down turns you right. Oh no. Instead, you're forced to endure the teeth-grinding prospect of using Up to actually go up, ensuring you never complete a race without suddenly veering off into the barriers, or wasting precious seconds caught behind a row of pine trees. The second control system doesn't solve the problem either. It just reverses Right and Left, an equally horrific prospect.

If it weren't for this, *Moseley* would be decent enough entertainment. There's plenty of tricks to pull off, the difficulty setting is nice and high, and there are some tidy tunes. But, the control system is such a let down, it's difficult to forgive the designers such an oversight. A shame.

2

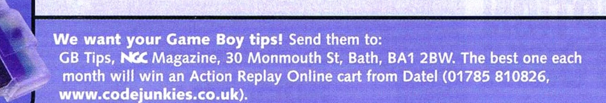
There are hidden skiers to discover.

When Moseley messes up a stunt, he grunts like a pig.



The courses are well designed, with some interesting scenery. Later on, you have to contend with sudden direction changes, too.





We want your Game Boy tips! Send them to: GB Tips, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. The best one each month will win an Action Replay Online cart from Datel (01785 810826, www.codejunkies.co.uk).



MEGA MAN BATTLE NETWORK





ACCESS DEEPER NET LINKS
In order to progress deeper into the net you'll need to get through the gates with the question marks on. To do this you'll need to fulfil certain criteria in some previous sections:

Area 11: Do not escape any fights in Area 10.
Area 12: Busting Level must exceed three after *every* fight in Area 11.
Area 13: Do not escape any fights in Area 10.
Area 14: Win at least ten battle chips from enemies in Area 13.
Area 15: Navigate Area 14 and get into as few fights as possible. If you encounter over eight battles, you'll have to start again.
Area 16: Busting Level must exceed four after every fight in Area 15.

MEET FORTE
Get all 175 battle chips – apart from the Dream Aura chip (127). Now head for the deepest section of the Net in Area 16 where you found the paradin sword. Walk around and Forte should appear – defeat him to get the Dream Aura chip.

SPYRO SEASON OF ICE

All codes need to be input at the Start screen.

INFINITE WEAPONS IN SPARX WORLDS
Down, Right, Up, Left, Left, Up, Right, Down, A.

INFINITE HEALTH IN SPARX WORLDS
Down, Up, Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Left, A.

99 LIVES IN A NEW GAME
Left, Right, Right, Right, Down, Up, Right, Up, A.

OPEN ALL PORTALS
Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Up, Down, A.

DOOM

Pause the game then hold both shoulder buttons before entering:

All weapons/guns
ABBAAAAA
God Mode
AABAAAAA
Invulnerability
BBBAAAAA
Computer map
BAAAAAAA
Radiation suit
BBAAAAAA
Berserk Mode
BABAAAAA
Warp to next level
ABAABBBA



ECKS VS SEVER

ECKS PASSWORDS

Level 02:	EXTREME
Level 03:	EXCITE
Level 04:	EXCAVATE
Level 05:	EXCALIBUR
Level 06:	EXTORT
Level 07:	EXPIRE
Level 08:	EXACT
Level 09:	EXHALE
Level 10:	EXHUME
Level 11:	EXONERATE
Level 12:	EXPEL

SEVER PASSWORDS

Level 02:	SEVERE
Level 03:	SURVIVE
Level 04:	SAVANT
Level 05:	SUFFER
Level 06:	SULPHER
Level 07:	SERVE
Level 08:	SEETHE
Level 09:	SEVERAL
Level 10:	SEVERANCE
Level 11:	SAVAGE
Level 12:	SACROSANCT

ACTION REPLAY CODES

ARMY MEN ADVANCE

(M)
788C9156 7BBF9830
EBA619C7 C6296E99

INFINITE GRENADES
E347EEE0 84031088

INFINITE MG AMMO
9B2AB995 88FF5775

INFINITE ROCKETS
A969E10D D83285C9

INFINITE FLAME AMMO
703039AE C90B2751

UZIS
EE51F7BF 6C834CD1

GRENADES
C9349083 0F80AF29

BAZOOKA
5814476D 3737C99A

FLAMETHROWER
4C043E0E 753BC56B

MINE
E6063B48 EDAC4A45

CAMOUFLAGE MODE
E5251F95 E40FDA8F

AR BUTTON FOR SHOW
78960794 27667199

BOMBERMAN TOURNAMENT

(M)
16EB89F0 873E93B8
4CD9A3BE 4D44E43D

INFINITE CASH
3198151B DB8435A4
DA90702D 3496E244

CANNOT DIE (QUEST)
D2797A10 00A1DAF2

AR BUTTON FOR SLOW
78960794 27667199

ASK OAK!

"Another month, another sackload of desperate pleading from helpless Pokémon trainers. Well, that's nice."

Peter Davies, Leeds: How on earth do I fight the leader of Viridian City Gym? I can't even find him, let alone take his badge! Also, I'm desperately trying to get hold of a Mr Mime. I've got *Pokémon Silver* – is he in it?

Prof Oak: Right then. To fight Blue you'll need to head for Cinnabar Island. Blue is staring out to sea. Talk to him and he'll return to the gym, but you can't fight him just yet. First, you'll need to surf past Cinnabar until you reach a small island. Here you'll find Blaine, master of fire-type Pokémon. Make sure you've got plenty of water-type Pokémon and give him a whupping. Now that you have the Volcano Badge, head back to fight Blue in Viridian City. Succeed and the Kanto Badge is yours. As for Mr Mime – he's not too far from you. Head for route 21 and search the patches of grass in the northern part of this area. Mr Mime should be there – but he may take some time to appear.

Martha Reece, London: Please help me Professor Oak. I'm looking for the moon stone but I just can't find it anywhere.

Prof Oak: Easy. Head to Mount Moon – if you've got that far – and make your way to the souvenir shop. Next to the shop is a small clearing which is host to the Clefairy Dance ever Monday night. Watch this dance and the Clefairy will leave a rock behind. Use Smash on the rock and the moon stone will be all yours. Good Luck.



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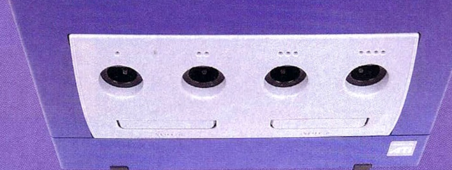
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NEXT MONTH...









GAMECUBE UK!

So, we finally know the launch date* – next month, we'll be reporting live from the Gamecube-dominated Millia show in Cannes. Don't miss out.





Turok Evolution • Die Hard • Cel Damage • ISS 2 • Resident Evil Biohazard • Dark Summit • ESPN International Winter Sports 2002

*If you haven't seen when it is yet, get yourself over to page 10 and 11 right this minute!



PLUS!

ETERNAL DARKNESS



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All magazine contents and free gifts subject to change. Sorry about that.



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TOTAL GAME SERVICE FOR NINTENDO OWNERS

Club GC

Welcome to Club GC, the part of the magazine designed to help you get the most out of your games.

The making of...



BLAST CORPS

A nostalgic look back at the destroy-'em-up classic. 90

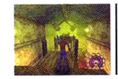
ALSO THIS MONTH...

The tips you want, quickly...

TIPS EXTRA


P69

SHADOWMAN
Stuck in a level with red goop and can't find La Soleil? You're in luck...



P68

DR KITTS
Solving your tips while scrabbling in a filing cabinet for more gin.




P67

C&C 64
Handy hints and tips for the creaky old dame of real-time strategy that can't go to the toilet by itself. (Tsch – Ed)



YOUR MOST WANTED TIPS

Fresh-squeezed hints from our orchard of fully-organic gaming wisdom.



1080° SNOWBOARDING

MESS WITH THE HALF-PIPE MUSIC
Once you've finished trick attack on the half-pipe, view the replay and use the analogue stick to scratch the music.

PENGUIN BOARD
Complete all tricks in Training mode, then push Bottom-C and A when choosing a rider's default board.

GOLD RIDER
Pass Expert mode using the Ice Rider. Now select Hensuke Kimache, press Top-C and tap A.

ICE RIDER
Complete Expert mode so you get the see-through rider. When you finish the level, select Akari, press Left-C, and then tap A.

EASY FAST START
Rather than just timing your speed boost, simply tap the analogue stick rapidly once the countdown begins. When the race finally starts, you'll streak into the lead.

EASY TRAINING MODE TRICKS
Start in Training mode and perform the first trick on the list. Now enter the trick list and scroll down until you get to the trick you want to complete, then press A. When you land the game will tell you the trick you highlighted has been completed as normal.

PANDA RIDER
Get all three best scores in the Contest mode and get the highest score and times for the the Trick and Time attacks. Now go to the player selection screen and highlight Rob Haywood before holding down Right-C and tapping A.

MICRO MACHINES 64



BEHIND CAR VIEW
Pause the game and enter the following:
Left, Right, Left-C, Right-C, Left, Right, Left-C, Right-C

TURN INTO GAME OBJECTS
Pause the game and enter the following button code on the D-pad:
Down, Down, Up, Up, Right, Right, Left, Left.
If you do it right you'll hear a beep to confirm entry.

SHOW-OFF FINISH
Simply press R as you pass the finish line.

SLOW CPU RACERS
A useful cheat for winning one-player races. Just pause the game during a race and enter the following:
Right-C, Down-C, Left-C, Down-C, Right-C, Top-C, Left-C, Down-C.

TURBO MODE
Pause the game and enter the following button code:
Left-C, Down-C, Right-C, Left-C, Up-C, Down-C, Down-C, Down-C, Down-C. A beeping sound will confirm that you've done it right.

SUPER JUMP
Pause the game and enter the following button code on the D-pad:
Right, Right, Down, Up, Down, Left, Down, Down.

TANKS
Enter ALLTANKS as your name to change all the cars into tanks.

MISCHIEF MAKERS

EXTRA HEALTH THE EASY WAY
Go to Western World and head for the area with the Clancers. The enemies will now swarm towards you, so grab one of them and give him a good shake. A green gem will come out with each and every shake.

INIFINITE RED RUBIES
Go to level 3-8 and shake the first Clancer you come across. He'll drop 30 red rubies. Now exit and immediately re-enter the level and repeat the process as many times as you need to.

SOUND TEST
At the title screen press and hold L, A, Left-C and Right-C and press Start.

FORSAKEN

For these to work, simply enter the following button codes on the main menu screen:

INVINCIBILITY
A, Z, Z, Up, Left, Left-C, Left-C, Bottom-C.

PSYCHEDELIC MODE
A, R, Left, Right, Down, Top-C, Left-C, Bottom-C.

HORROR MODE
Z, Down, Top-C, Left-C, Left-C, Left-C, Left-C, Bottom-C.

UNLOCK ALL MISSIONS
A, R, Z, Up, Up, Top-C, Bottom-C, Bottom-C.

WIREFRAME MODE
L, L, R, Z, Left, Right, Top-C, Right-C.

UNLIMITED NITRO
B, B, R, Up, Left, Down, Top-C, Left-C.



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

UNLOCK OFFICER DICK
Beat the game once with any character, with all goals complete, all cash found, and gold medals on all the competitions.

UNLOCK SPIDER-MAN
To get Spidey, finish the game with 100 per cent goals complete with a created skater.

UNLOCK MCSQUEEB
Beat the game with 100 per cent goals complete with the Hawkster himself to unlock McSqueeb (aka 80s Tony).

PRIVATE CARRERA
Find and successfully navigate every gap in the game to complete the gap checklist to unlock Private Carrera.

HAWAII LEVEL
Earn all three Gold medals with every character (including a created skater) to get this fantastic new level.

SKATE HEAVEN LEVEL
Complete the game with 100 per cent goals complete with all characters, including secret and created skaters, to unlock this course.

BOMBERMAN 64

EGGY IN EVERY STAGE
Enter a stage where the screen freezes whenever you catch something or hit a switch. Now, make a single remote bomb, just before you press a switch or catch something, and drop it a short distance away from you. A split second after you detonate it, catch the item or flip the switch to create your very own artificial eggy.



HIDDEN BATTLE STAGES
Normal mode: complete the game in its entirety (including the Rainbow Palace) to unlock the first two stages.

Hard mode: complete the game in its entirety (again including the Rainbow Palace) to unlock the last two battle stages, Blizzard Battle and Lost at Sea.

Alternatively, at the main menu, hammer the start button extremely fast. Continue to do this until you hear a chime. Four new levels in battle mode now await.

OPEN RAINBOW PALACE
Find all 100 Gold Cards and defeat Altair. You can do this on Normal and Hard modes.

COMMAND & CONQUER 64

ACCESS ALL MISSIONS
When you're on the title screen, quickly tap in the following button code (before the demo starts to kick in): B, A, R, R, A, Left-C, Up, Down, A. Now, head to the Replay Mission screen and press the left shoulder button – a list of all the missions will now appear.

INSTANTLY WIN (OR LOSE) A MISSION
When you're on the title screen, quickly enter the following button code: B, A, R, R, A, Right-C, Up, Down, A. Now, during a mission, you can simply press L + R + Up to win the mission, or L + R + Down to lose the mission.

ACTION REPLAY



CASTLEVANIA 64

Infinite health 80389C43 0050
Infinite money 81389C4A 0FA0
Infinite red jewels 80389C4D 0046
Max power-up 80389CF1 0002
Status always good
80389C8C 0000

Access all items (A)
50000901 0000
80389C4F 000A

Access all items (B)
50001401 0000
80389C5E 000A
Rob Mangle, Cardiff

LYLAT WARS

Infinite energy (Fox)
8113E7A6 00FF
81141686 00FF

Infinite energy (Wingmen)
81179A26 00FF
81179A22 00FF
81179A1E 00FF

Infinite lives
81163C09 0063

Blue lasers
81163C13 0002

Never chase
81179FDB 0401

Infinite boost
8113E5F4 41AC
8113E6D4 3F80
8013E7FC 0010

Access all gold medals
50001801-0000
8017A9D8 0006
Richard Gull, Manchester

For information about Action Replay carts, call Datel on 01785 810826 or visit www.codejunkies.co.uk

YOUR TOP TIP

Found an interesting cheat, tip, secret bit or quirky thing to do in one of your games? Then send it to us immediately! Each month we'll stick the best into our Readers' Tips column over the page, and if you make it in, we'll send you a rather flash NGC pin badge. If you get the coveted number-one slot, you'll get something extra special.

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HERE'S MY TOP TIP

It's for [game name]:

And I've found that if you:

TIPS EXTRA

Send to: Tips Extra, NGC Magazine 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room.

READERS' TOP 10 TIPS

Remember, the best one wins an Action Replay cart from Datel (01785 810826, www.codejunkies.co.uk)



1 STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER
On the last level, when you're escaping the reactor's explosion. Close your wings right away and get past the Millennium Falcon before the first bend. Now keep opening and closing your wings on the straights. If you can stay ahead of the Falcon, it'll make life much easier and the flames won't even reach you.
Gareth Peterson, Norwich

2 POKÉMON STADIUM 2
Beat the minigame championships on Hard mode with nine coins at stake, and you'll unlock the Very Hard mode for an extra challenge.
Chris Horner, N. Ireland



3 PERFECT DARK
Press A then B quickly when the combat simulator option is highlighted, and the main menu background will have changed colour.
Steven Carne, Callington

4 EXCITEBIKE 64
You can actually pull off wheelies for as long as you want. Simply execute a wheelie and then make sure you keep the analogue stick halfway down. You can even turn corners like this.
Paul West, Derby

5 DUKE NUKEM ZERO HOUR
Snipers can sometimes be seen aiming without holding up their rifles, so it looks like the laser's coming straight from their heads, like the Borg.
Stuart Martin, Preston

6 PILOTWINGS 64
If you shoot Mario's face with missiles in the Gyrocopter thingy, his face turns into Wario.
Jen Phillips, Cornwall

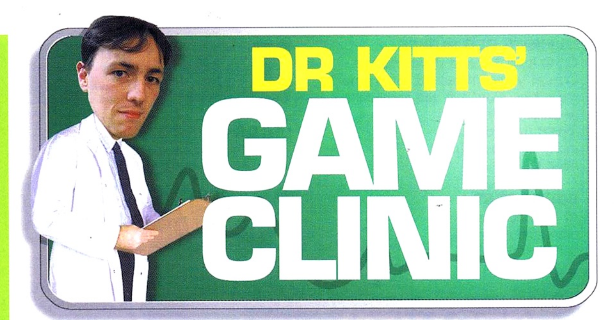
7 VIGILANTE 8
If you rapidly tap A instead of holding it down, you get up hills much more quickly.
Michael Hyland, Accrington

8 KIRBY: CRYSTAL SHARDS
If you're stuck on a hard boss or a tricky level, simply go back to an easier level and choose the power-ups you want. Now pause the game and select Try Again, then return to the level you want to complete.
Henry Jones, Oxon

9 BATTLETANX GLOBAL ASSAULT
Using a mototank, drive into one of the subways. As soon as you're in the entrance, reverse out and then drive back in again. Keep going in and out and eventually you'll be able to go through the scenery.
Philip Erskine, Belfast

10 PAPER MARIO
Unfortunately, there *isn't* an infinite supply of Whacka's Bumps as we so incorrectly stated in the guide in issue 60. If you abuse him too much he'll get stroppy and leave – so make sure you explore plenty of alternative health-giving avenues. Sorry about that!
NGC Bath





DR KITTS' GAME CLINIC

The world's scariest doctor deals out the medication to gaming's injured.



Dr Kitts,
I can't beat the Dojo Master in *Paper Mario*. How many grades are there, and do I get anything for actually beating him? Also, I'm past the toy box but I haven't beaten the grey Shy Guy. What does he have hidden in that treasure box? And is there any point in going back for it?
Dave Roberts, Plymouth

BATTLE FOR NABOO

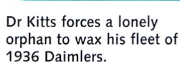
Dr Kitts,
I'm trying to get a Gold medal on the Battle for Naboo level in *Star Wars: Battle For Naboo* but I, erm, can't. Help, please.
James Parton, Nottingham

Dr Kitts dons a lumberjack shirt and stands in front of a blue screen making a humming noise.
First of all, you should always try to keep your bearings. The space-based levels in Naboo are wretched, so refrain from rolling as it's liable to screw you up and lose you valuable time. Next, you only need 22 kills and an accuracy of 40 per cent for gold. Avoid attacking whole squadrons of ships, and concentrate on quickly chasing down ships that break formation. Now tackle the control ship by sharing out your missiles among the three tractor beams and the shield generator before finishing them off with lasers. Lastly, approaching the control ship from above and the rear, blast all your missiles into it before ploughing yourself in there kamikaze-style. You can afford to lose one life so it's okay. You should now have a new complement of missiles to help bring it down quicker.

SHADOWMAN

Dr Kitts,
In *Shadowman*, where can I find the second piece of the L'Eclipser (I already have La Lune). Ta very much me old mucker.
Mike Boyce, via email

Dr Kitts wanders aimlessly in the darkness for hours on end…
To find La Soleil, start from where you found the first piece and fall into the pit and enter the nearest coffin gate. You should now be in a place with a lava pit. This is the entrance to the Fire Temple. Go through the coffin gate that requires the least amount of Shadowpower and you'll find yourself in a room with loads of red goop. From here, find a shadowgate that will open to a Shadowpower of five. La Soleil is inside.



Dr Kitts forces a lonely orphan to wax his fleet of 1936 Daimlers.
The Dojo Master has five levels to beat – four levels, and then the Diploma. You don't really get anything for beating him, but it's worth doing as the practice will be much needed for the final boss encounter and you could always do with the extra experience, right? As for the grey Shy Guy's treasure box, it's got a Power Plus badge in there – another worthy addition to your collection, so make sure you get it.

Dr Kitts,
In *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2* I've made it as far as Philadelphia. I've managed to complete most of the goals, but I can't seem to drain the fountain. How do you do it?
Steven Warren, Gloucester

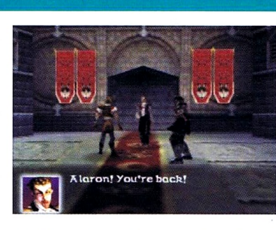
Dr Kitts skulks in a Tesco car-park armed with a sniper rifle.
This one's not actually that tricky. You just need to make sure you have plenty of speed. Right from the start, grind the spine directly in front of you – this should give you an extra boost. Now stay tight against the white wall and just before the stairs, grind down the far-left rail onto the planter ramp below. Boneless off the ramp and you should make it to the balcony above. If you miss, just grind the balcony rail and hop down on the other side. Now just hit the valve in this area and the fountain will be drained.

Dr Kitts,
On *Conker's Bad Fur Day*, I've got to the bit with the little girl in the ground and the submarines that shoot missiles at you, but whatever I do I can't blow the subs up because I don't even have time to aim at them before getting hit. It's impossible.
Kelly White, Newcastle

Dr Kitts combs and blow-dries his ginger chest wig.
This can be very frustrating, especially if you keep falling in the water. Thankfully, there's a infinite supply of re-spawning chocolate under the arches, which you can also use as a safe house if you fancy a breather. The best tactic is to hide under the arch until you hear the missiles explode. Now run to the B-pad and get out your rocket launcher, but don't fire at the subs. Instead, aim into the sky and take out the rockets before attacking them. If you keep destroying the missiles first you'll have plenty of time for the subs.

Dr Kitts,
How do you beat the Shiver Star boss in *Kirby: The Crystal Shards*?
Daniel Price, Chesterfield

Dr Kitts sucks in his gut and slips into a tight pink leotard.
Nice and simple, this. Stay to the boss' left and wait for his first attack. Suck up the missiles (or suck up the crystals after he smashes the platform's centre). Either way, you'll want to shoot these back at his long arms. Keep an eye on the indicator at the top of his head. If it glows blue you'll need to dodge his laser attack. Once you've dealt enough damage, he'll start destroying the platform. Now you'll have to suck the yellow part of the incoming missiles while avoiding the white parts. Spit these back at the black weak spot on his hull. It's worth remembering that the more missiles you inhale, the more powerful your attack.



Dr Kitts,
I'm looking for Trahern's sword in *Aiydn Chronicles* but I've searched the castle fully and still can't find it. How do I get it?
Luke Taylor, Cumbria

Dr Kitts desperately tries to flush away the evidence.
From the castle entrance, head for the door with the moon and make your way to the library. From here, climb the stairs that lead outside and find the door that leads to Bowden. Talk to him and choose the following responses: "Any exciting experiments lately?" and "Yes. I would." You should now have Bowden's Key. Go back to the library, then go downstairs and through the next door you see. Keep going forward and you'll eventually reach a room with Trahern's sword and a locked treasure chest. Now go and find Trahern and he'll tell you to keep the sword.



GOT A GAMING QUERY?

Doesn't matter how small or precise, write in to Dr Kitts for the answer. Detail your problem on the form below (use a separate piece of paper if necessary) and post it off to:

cut out and send

GOOD AFTERNOON DOCTOR…

Name……………………………………

Address……………………………………

……………………………………

……………………………………

……………………………………

……………………………………

Postcode……………………………………

I've got this terrible gaming affliction – it's like this…



Send to: Dr Kitts' Game Clinic, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room.

Developers versus us versus you

I'M THE BEST

Only the bestest get to be in the I'm The Best gang – everyone else smells of crappy poo.

KEY TO THE LEAGUES

- ▲ GOING UP
- ▶ NON-MOVER
- ▼ GOING DOWN
- N NEW!



STAR PERFORMANCE Gold

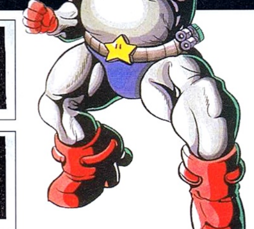


We've had to put up with a week of tantrums, shouting, and a nasty episode with a chisel that was only curtailed by Tim's timely application of a cattle prod to the kumquats, but Geraint's now taped up in the cupboard with his head in a vice, and while his screams are drowned out only by the sound of the merciless administration of 'remedial electricity', Wrexham's Ian Ellis' new *No Mercy* TKO record of *four seconds* stands intact. "I doubt anyone will be able to beat this," brags Ian – and we're far too scared to argue. Will a gold certificate and a Mirage joypad from Wild Things be sufficient, sir?

STAR PERFORMANCE Silver

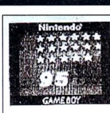


Geraint still "swears on my frail old Granny's life" that he scored "about 33 grand a while back" on *San Francisco Rush 2049*, but until the suspiciously-lacking evidence comes to light, Granny'll just have to stay in the basement with the giant mantis. Steve Waterman from Surrey, however, requires no such encouragement – lo, gaze left in awe at his mighty scores of 19,923 on The Rim and 14,190 on the Disco arena, and tell us you're not impressed. "Pleeeaase print my results," Steve whines. "Otherwise I'll feel totally gutted." Well, if you say so – although not as gutted as Greener felt after the chisel episode (see left). Pleeeaase accept a shiny silver-effect Star Performance certificate in recognition of your bell-rocking efforts, Steve.



STAR PERFORMANCE Bronze

Game Boy cameras are fine for many things, but their merits when it comes to providing proof for I'm The Best entries leave much to be desired. Still, despite the frankly appaling, Is-this-blurry-shape-really-Bigfoot standard of evidence, we're willing to take Hampshire's Andrew Simmonds' impressive claims of winning all six races on Jack Cup and destroying 95 opponents in *F-Zero X* at face value. "Is that good enough?" inquires Andrew. It's good, alright – good enough for a Bronze certificate, say we. But you'd better not be lying to us, you little runt. And you don't get to be Andrew 'Snap Master' Simmonds until we say so, either – alright?







BEAT THE DEVELOPER

Nintendo UK moved house recently – but while most of their staff have been busy hauling boxes and wrapping up vases in newspaper, James Honeywell, their Product Executive and all-round games head, has been hiding in the removal van playing with his Game Boy Advance. The cad!

What they've been playing



James has been whiling away his hours on Super Mario Advance 2 *this month – and just look what he's achieved. All 96 exits found, 354 lives collected, and a total score of 3,324,500. What's that? You think you can do better? Man alive. Best send your attempt to the address above, then, oh brave one.*

THIS MONTH'S TIME TO BEAT

Thousands of you are now the proud owners of Nintendo's purple box of delight – as the sackloads of Gamecube high-scores currently cluttering up our office proves. Every record we receive is picked up and laughed at mockingly by self-proclaimed 'hardcore' gamer Mark 'Greener' Green – so, once again, we'd like one of you folks to beat some sense into him. His best distance of 1158.8ft on Smash Bros Melee's Home Run Contest *is ripe for the trouncing – and there's a GC joypad in it for you if yours is the best score we receive.*



***NGC**/63's winner: James Honeywell's* Luigi's Mansion *record of 135,525,000G has given a thorough beating by Tim Dyer of Hertfordshire – he notched up an eyebrow-raising score of 142,775,000G. That earns him a gold Mirage joypad from Wild Things. Lucky fella.*



MARIO KART 64

BEST RACE TIMES



MARIO RACEWAY

1	1'07"97	Jess Walters	*Chesterfield*
2	1'08"93	Tony Dunster	*London*
3	1'09"36	Mark Green	NGC
4	1'09"88	Martin Kitts	*ex-*NGC
5	1'11"42	Kyan S Kia	*Halifax*

TOP TIP

On the bend before the hairpin with the giant mushroom, powerslide uphill and turn to face the wall on the other side. When you hit the track, use your mushroom and you'll fly over the wall.

KOOPA TROOPA BEACH

1	1'37"24	Sami Cetin	*London*
2	1'39"99	Kenneth Crowley	*Co. Dublin*
3	1'39"99	Jess Walters	*Chesterfield*
4	1'42"41	Paul Dossis	*Gameplay Studios*
5	1'42"55	Tony Dunster	*London*

TOP TIP

Use your mushroom on the section which splits past the huge rock with the left and right arrows. This will give you added pace, but you'll have to use the hop to get through the normal shortcut.

ROYAL RACEWAY

1	2'15"37	Kyan S Kia	*Halifax*
2	2'18"28	Peter Shrubshall	*Tenerife*
3	2'54"59	Sami Cetin	*London*
4	2'54"82	Paul Dossis	*Gameplay Studios*
5	2'58"08	Kenneth Crowley	*Co. Dublin*

TOP TIP

Not any shortcuts to speak of here. Just make sure you get a powerslide boost on every corner and stay tight round the bends. You can also try powersliding over the grass before the big jump.

LUIGI RACEWAY

1	1'15"45	Daniel Weaver	*Warwickshire*
2	1'47"67	Kyan S Kia	*Halifax*
3	1'48"50	Kenneth Crowley	*Co. Dublin*
4	1'54"28	Paul Dossis	*Gameplay Studios*
5	1'56"16	Jess Walters	*Chesterfield*

TOP TIP

Always get as many boost slides as possible. You should be able to get at least three on each bend, especially the long sweeping bends, and at least two inside, and in the exit of, the tunnel.

PERFECT DARK

BEST TIMES (AGENT MODE)



DATADYNE: DEFECTION

1	0m 36s	Tony Dunster	*London*
2	0m 40s	Simon Moon	*Leicester*
3	0m 42s	'Badger' Maddrell	*ex-*NGC
4	0m 43s	Robert Cashman	*Co. Dublin*
=	0m 43s	Charles Napier	*Birmingham*

TOP TIP

The best tactic is to just keep charging forward. Don't hang around to kill everyone and just move forward pumping lead into anything that gets in your way. Remember to reload constantly.

CARRINGTON VILLA

1	1m 20s	Andrew Simmonds	*Hampshire*
2	1m 22s	Tony Dunster	*London*
3	1m 39s	Robert Cashman	*Co. Dublin*
4	1m 47s	John Holland	*Nottingham*
5	1m 49s	Daniel Weaver	*Warwickshire*

TOP TIP

As with most missions, it's important to memorise the enemy position and level layout. It's also worth remembering the sniper positions so that you can take them out with little fuss.

G5 BUILDING

1	1m 02s	Tony Dunster	*London*
2	1m 28s	Stuart Strachan	*Dundee*
3	1m 36s	Robert Cashman	*Co. Dublin*
4	1m 38s	Chris Wade	*Grantham*
5	1m 39s	John Holland	*Nottingham*

TOP TIP

Remember to use the CMP's lock on function as soon as you pick one up. You don't want to waste time against those cloaking Datadyne personnel. Also, be sure to keep your cam-spy out of sight.



AREA 51: ESCAPE

1	2m 38s	Andrew Simmonds	*Hampshire*
2	2m 54s	Tony Dunster	*London*
3	3m 25s	Daniel Weaver	*Warwickshire*
4	3m 30s	Karl Davies	*Suffolk*
5	3m 35s	Stuart Strachan	*Dundee*

TOP TIP

At the start, leg it to the corridor, ignoring everything else before tapping B at the top so that Elvis hovers after you. Then on in, it's a case of grabbing a Super Dragon for the quick kills.



GOLDENEYE 007

BEST TIMES (AGENT MODE)



FACILITY

1	1:00	Justin Badger	Wolverhampton
2	1:01	Tony Dunster	London
3	1:05	Kyan S Kia	Halifax
4	1:08	James Hogg	Barnet
5	1:10	Stuart Strachan	Dundee

TOP TIP

There are large sections of this level you don't have to navigate at all. The only trouble you may have in terms of time wasting is Dr bleedin' Doak. If he's not in the labs, just abort and try again.



ARCHIVES

1	0:20	Tony Dunster	London
2	0:21	Justin Badger	Wolverhampton
3	0:22	Jess Walters	Chesterfield
=	0:22	Kyan S Kia	Halifax
4	0:25	Alex Williams	Worcestershire

TOP TIP

Strafe for your life. The zig-zagging technique is essential here. Also, remember your ability to destroy crates. This will make killing any hiding guards a damn sight easier.



BUNKER 2

1	0:32	Tony Dunster	London
=	0:32	Justin Badger	Wolverhampton
2	0:36	James Hogg	Barnet
3	0:38	Kyan S Kia	Halifax
4	0:39	Jess Walters	Chesterfield

TOP TIP

Get rid of surveillance equipment fast. Avoiding the shade wearing double-shooter guards will also save you loads of hassle. And using the windows in the doors will score you easy head shots.



TRAIN

1	0:36	James Hogg	Barnet
2	1:42	Justin Badger	Wolverhampton
3	1:51	Jess Walters	Chesterfield
4	1:55	Kyan S Kia	Halifax
=	1:55	Tony Dunster	London

TOP TIP

Memorise guard locations, stand your ground in the open and just blast them in their faces. Then speed through – the second you open the door to the main carriage, pump the room full of lead.



F-ZERO X

BEST RACE TIMES



MUTE CITY

1	01'16"428	Andy Simmonds	Hampshire
2	01'26"352	Paul Galvin	Dublin
3	01'26"736	Tony Dunster	London
4	01'28"467	Alistair Bell	Kilmarnock
5	01'29"062	Karoutas Andreas	Greece

TOP TIP

This course has four speed boosts. Memorise their locations so you hit them all. It's also a good idea to steadily pump your boost power to feel it's benefits for the duration. And approach the head of the pack early to avoid any traffic.

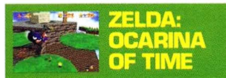


DEATH RACE

1	0'29"734	Justin Badger	Wolverhampton
2	0'29"734	Tony Dunster	London
3	0'41"430	Andy Simmonds	Hampshire
4	0'45"600	Adam Goodwin	York
5	0'45"712	Kyan S Kia	Halifax

TOP TIP

The easiest ways to score kills is to knock ships off the track. Drive parallel to the ship you want to destroy, double-tap the relevant trigger and nudge the analogue towards them at the same time. Careful you don't spin off yourself, mind.



ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME

BEST SCORE



GERUDO EQUESTRIAN SHOOTING RANGE

1	2000	Tony Dunster	London
=	2000	Kyan S Kia	Halifax
=	2000	Tom Demandt	Belgium
2	1960	David Cathrine	Edinburgh
3	1920	James Hogg	Barnet

TOP TIP

Once you've got the gist of where everything is, concentrate on claiming as many bullseyes as possible (1000 points each). As they say, practice makes perfect.



BANJO-KAZOOIE

BEST TIME (10 JIGGIES, 100 NOTES, 2 HONEYCOMBS)



MUMBO'S MOUNTAIN

1	00:07:33	Tim Weaver	NGC
2	00:07:45	Alan Maddrell	ex-NGC
3	00:08:20	Steve Jalim	ex-NGC
4	00:09:22	Mark Green	NGC
5	00:11:04	Tim Weaver	NGC

TOP TIP

Head straight for Bottles to learn the talon trot (this way you move faster). Without Kazooie's help, you'll be hard-pushed to get all ten jiggies in a decent time.



SUPER MARIO 64

BEST TIMES



PRINCESS PEACH'S SLIDE

1	0'12"9	Tony Dunster	*London*
2	0'13"0	Justin Badger	*Wolverhampton*
3	0'13"1	Kyan S Kia	*Halifax*
4	0'13"7	Martin Bristow	*Anglesey*
5	0'16"2	Stuart Strachan	*Dundee*

TOP TIP

To score under 20 seconds with ease use this shortcut. As you come out of the starting tunnel you'll come to a straight descent. Jump off to the left when you get to this section and try to land on the track below. It may take a little practice to master but it is possible – just make sure you press Z before you hit the track.



KOOPA RACE 1

1	0'00"0	Martin Bristow	*Anglesey*
2	0'12"7	Andy Simmonds	*Hampshire*
3	0'18"7	Justin Badger	*Wolverhampton*
4	0'21"4	Nik Bowen	*Gameplay Studios*
5	0'22"9	Greener	NGC

TOP TIP

Whatever you do don't use any of the warps, because you'll be cheating and you'll automatically lose. The best route is to take the main path. Make sure you use the Long Jump technique as much as possible as it is significantly faster than running. You should be aiming to get well under one minute if you can.

ZELDA MAJORA'S MASK

BEST TIMES



GORON RACES

1	1:15:23	Tom Demandt	*Belgium*
2	1:18:29	James Hogg	*Barnet*
3	1:21:54	Benjamin Tatlow	*London*
4	1:22:00	Stuart Strachan	*Dundee*
5	1:25:03	Alan Maddrell	*ex-*NGC

TOP TIP

The main tactic here is to make absolutely sure you don't deviate from the inside line. If you can hold it all the way you'll get a great time. Also avoid hitting anything – it'll slow you down a treat. And make sure you never run low on magic by collecting as many green bottles as you possibly can.



BEAVER RACE 2

1	1:15:23	Tom Demandt	*Belgium*
2	1:36:80	Andrew Simmonds	*Hampshire*
3	1:47:00	James Hogg	*Barnet*
4	1:50:18	Alan Maddrell	*ex-*NGC
5	1:55:42	Tim Weaver	NGC

TOP TIP

This is very straightforward. It's worth remembering that the rings themselves will stall Link if he hits the rim, so always make sure you line yourself up as centrally as possible. Other than that, it's merely a case of memorising the layout and practising until your eyes bleed and you realise you've not eaten for 10 years.

HERE'S MY BEST TIME



cut out and send

SUPER MARIO 64 — Best times
- Princess Peach's Slide ________
- Koopa Race 1 ________

GOLDENEYE 007 — Best times (Agent)
- Facility ________
- Archives ________
- Bunker 2 ________
- Train ________

MARIO KART — Best race times
- Mario Raceway ________
- Koopa Troopa Beach ________
- Royal Raceway ________
- Luigi Raceway ________

F-ZERO X — Best race times
- Mute City ________
- Death race ________

ZELDA MAJORA'S MASK — Best times
- Goron Races ________
- Underwater Beaver Race 2 ________

BANJO-KAZOOIE — Mumbo's Mountain (10 jiggies, 100 notes, 2 honeycombs)
- Mumbo's Mountain ________

ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME — Best score
- Equestrian Shooting Range ________

PERFECT DARK — Best times (Agent mode)
- Datadyne: Defection ________
- Carrington Villa ________
- G5 Building ________
- Area 51: Escape ________

Name ....

Address ....

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Postcode ....

You must include **VIDEO EVIDENCE OF YOUR ENTIRE ATTEMPT** for it to be accepted (see Skill Club Next Gen if you're not sure how to do this). Tapes MUST have a label attached, with your name, address and score and time easily legible or they will be thrown into our big pit of despair.

If you'd like to have your video back, please include a stamped, addressed envelope (with the correct number of stamps) and we'll promise to do our best to return them to you.

And remember, each issue of the mag has to be completed far earlier than you could ever imagine, so don't fret if your entry doesn't appear in the issue after you put your stuff in the post – it'll be there in the next one. So, pack up your bits and send them all to: **I'm the Best, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.**

Challenges to test the best

GAME ON

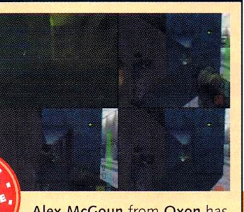


Not long until Gamecube's UK release now, but lose yourself in our multitude of N64 gaming challenges and you're unlikely to even notice when the delayed purple beggar marches into UK territory.

This issue, we've concentrated our consummate gaming skills on Hudson's not-at-all-bad *Mario Party 3*, which has been bouncing merrily around the upper regions of the N64 charts since its release last November. The cart's 70-odd minigames are enjoyable enough – but the unique spin we've put on them with our octet of cranium-numbing challenges should keep you plugging away well past *Mario Party 3*'s expected use-by date.

Add to that a quality quartet of reader challenges and you're almost literally laughing. Almost. Enjoy!

PERFECT DARK



TOP CHALLENGE

Alex McGoun from **Oxon** has the perfect *PD* challenge for pacifists everywhere. Start a combat simulator game on the Grid map with three friends, using Slayers and One-Hit KOs. The four of you should sign an instant truce and stand in a line, facing the blue corridor near the bottom-floor lift. Fire off a rocket each, and guide it around two laps of the bottom floor circuit. First to get hit by their own rocket wins.

Alex's best: 22-second lap

CONKER'S BAD FUR DAY



Andrew McCaskill from **Lancing** is risking a crack RSPCA team crashing through his window thanks to this challenge. Select the Zombies chapter and scamper up the stairs to the bat-filled room, blasting the bonces off any zombies who get in your way. Now stand atop the B-pad and aim to shoot every bat *twice* with your crossbow before they hit the ground. Repeat in the second bat-infested room, then count up your successful double-hits.

Andrew's best: 5 hits

WORMS ARMAGEDDON



More Rolf Harris-baiting animal torture courtesy of **Philip Erskine** from **Northern Ireland**. Start an ordinary match, and pick a map that features water on both the left and right sides. Use the Select Worm skill to pick a wriggly who's near the drink, then assume control of a nearby opponent and whip out your baseball bat. You know what's coming, right? Whack the annelid square in the face, then carefully count how many times they bounce before sinking to the sea bed.

Philip's best: 4 bounces

MARIO KART 64



Ah, what fond memories we have of tearing around *MK 64*'s sublime courses, careering through the multi-coloured power-ups. But what's this? **Charlotte Levy** from **South Devon** has thunk up a challenge where the aim is to avoid those super-tempting '?' blocks altogether! "It's actually quite hard," she says – and she's right. Choose any course and see how many polyhedral boxes of delight you accidentally crash into.

Charlotte's best: 1 power-up

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

GAME ON

CHALLENGES WANTED!

As well as all the usual games, we're particularly interested in challenges for…
**Pokémon Stadium 2 • Paper Mario • Star Wars: Battle for Naboo
Conker's Bad Fur Day • Banjo-Tooie • Excitebike 64**
We'll print the best of them right here, and what's more, the top challenge each month wins an Action Replay cart from Datel (01785 810826, www.codejunkies.co.uk). Can't say fairer than that.

Send your challenges to:
Game On, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW



TEAM CHALLENGES MARIO PARTY 3

COLD AS ICE



The four-player Ice Rink Risk minigame is the setting for this test of your leaping skills. Against three CPU competitors set to Hard, the aim is to leap *over* the spiky spinning shells as many times as possible within the 30-second time limit. A jump only counts if your shadow passes at least partially underneath the shell below – and if you get deflected by a rival, it's nil points. Keep an eye on the shells that drop into the arena, as it's easy to accidentally land on them.

Mark's best: 13 jumps

SPIN ON THIS



Select the Crazy Cogs minigame, ensuring that you're the player handed control of The Big Lever, and you're up against a trio of Normal CPU rivals. The aim? To help your three 'friends' *avoid* the Bullet Bills that come crashing down onto the cogs. It's a nightmare, not least because those N64-controlled Nintendo characters are particularly adept at running straight towards an explosive death. Clock the time that the first CPU character gets blown out of the arena.

Geraint's best: 47 seconds

BOUNCING WITH DINOSAURS



Simple, this – see if you can beat Tim's record of 27 spiky-haired foes bopped in the Baby Bowser Bonkers minigame. You don't need to jump onto a Baby Bowser to squish them – simply walking over to them will do the job – *but* if you press A as you land on their bonce, you can use the analogue stick to leap over to a neighbour. Repeat this as many times as you like to create a record-breaking Bowser-bashing combo. Steering clear of your rival is recommended, too.

Tim's best: 27 bonks

WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN



A, Z, A, Z, A, Z... and so on. That's the only tip we can offer you for this less-than-complicated challenge – beating Mark's hefty Pump, Pump and Away record. Feel free to ask a friend to help, but we found it easier to enrol a Hard CPU opponent as our pumping partner. You don't have to wait for the pumping mechanism to flash before swapping buttons – time it *exactly right* and you can switch to A or Z just before you're strictly allowed to. Beast. Well beast.

Mark's Best: 421 yards

FORE YOUR PLEASURE



The *Mario Golf*-alike Chip Shot Challenge is the minigame to choose for this challenge – but you'll need to make sure that you're *not* player one. Step one is to wait for your friends – CPU or human – to take their shots. Step two is to ignore the actual hole and instead aim to get your ball as close as possible to *one* of your friends' resting places. You can *very* roughly calculate your success by the difference between you and your foes' recorded distances. Fore!

Mark's best: 0.25m

MID-AIR MERRIMENT



Player one *must* be your choice for this one, which takes place in the Ridiculous Relay. You're in the hang-glider, and your mission is to avoid bashing into any of the Bullet Bills and flying Goombas that hover into view as you glide towards the finish line. Don't forget that you can pull forwards and backwards as well as tilt up and down – vital for manoeuvring yourself between the floating baddies. Don't be afraid to stick to the right-hand side, either – fewer Goombas crop up over there.

Geraint's best: 2 hits

SPEEDBOAT SPEEDWAY



You were waiting for a Water Whirled challenge, weren't you? And surprise, surprise, because tearing around the course, shaving milliseconds off the race record is so much *fun*, our task is no more complicated than to beat Tim's time. "Brake for the corners," is the only glistening nugget of advice Mr Weaver would offer us – but we'll add to that by advising you to follow the racing line, heading wide before each turn, then shaving the inside of the u-bend.

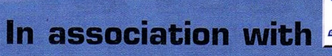
Tim's best: 37'23"

THE WALL



Mario's Puzzle Party is arguably the best of the minigames in *MP3* – but Geraint's handy challenge helps make it even better. Play as normal, but see how many points you can rack up without allowing your ever-rising column of blocks to touch the bottom of your character's logo – that's the circular thing sitting halfway up the well. Oh, and remember to set the maximum score to 1000 before you start, or your attempt will probably be over before it's begun.

Geraint's best: 885





SKILL CLUB NEXT GEN

The road to the top is long and filled with danger. Try not to trip on your shoelaces.

Ah – Skill Club! While other sections of the mag change and warp into ever-more-confusing and complex patterns of insane, vivid colours and, in Greener's case, a little babbling, we can always rely on you, a flourishing thing of natural beauty and organic growth, slowly adding new rings to its burgeoning stump every issue. Granted, after the hyperventilating, limb-jerking excitement that accompanied last month's solitary Platinum entry, the dust's settled. But there's one thing Skill Club isn't – and that's dull! Two clubbers in particular – Bruce Thomson and Joseph Murphy – have done themselves proud, having ascended from Bronze and Silver to Silver and Gold respectively. Well done, chaps – have some certificates to celebrate, why don't you?

Come on in, the water's lovely!

So, if you're already on the list, but are just a challenge shy of jumping up a notch, there's nothing stopping you from adding to your score later. Three challenges and a Bronze certificate and pride of place in our Bronze league will be yours. Seven and you're bumped up to Silver league status; it's ten for a Gold certificate and a Gamester Advanced Controller (or a Gamester Tremor Pak with 1Mb memory), and 14 to join the Platinum league. And if you can do all 20... well, someone did once, and we gave them a job. Making tea – forever! Mwahahaha!

the rules

- *You need to accomplish three challenges to earn yourself a Bronze placing, seven for Silver, ten for Gold and 14 for Platinum. And if you manage all 20, we'll send you something extra special...*
- *You can enter whichever challenges you like – it is entirely up to you.*
- *You can use either PAL (UK or Australian) or NTSC (US or Japanese) copies of the games featured here, but if you opt for NTSC you'll have to achieve the faster of the two listed times for Mario Kart.*
- *Each challenge entered must be accompanied by photographic or video proof.*
- *We know how to recognise the influence of cheat carts and codes, as well as doctored digital camera shots. Offenders will be held up to ritual humiliation and stoned out of the country by zealous citizens.*
- *You can enter the leagues in stages if you wish. Make it into the Bronze league first, then later you can send us further proof to elevate yourself to a loftier position. Bonzer.*
- *Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum leagues will be published in a future edition of NGC.*
- *If you'd like to have your tapes or photographs back, please include a stamped, addressed envelope.*

HOW TO... prove your achievements

Taking photographs

Point at the screen and click away. For best results, turn off or cover up the flash (it will reflect off the screen), draw the curtains and use a fast film – 200 or, best of all, 400 ASA. With a digicam, use a slow shutter speed.

Taking videos

1. Take the lead that connects your N64 to your TV and plug it into the 'Signal In' socket on the back of your video recorder.
2. Connect the 'Signal Out' socket on your video to your TV and turn both on.
3. Switch your TV to the video channel and switch on your N64 with a game plugged into it.
4. Find a spare channel on the video's tuning mechanism and look for the N64 signal. Save the setting.
5. Complete your challenge and get to the appropriate result screen.
6. Pop in a tape and press 'Record'. Press 'Stop' after five or so seconds.
7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 according to the number of challenges you're attempting.
8. Rewind the tape to the beginning of your evidence (so we can see your scores quickly and easily). And that's about it.



Hello there,

I'd like to put myself forward for the Bronze/Silver/Gold/Platinum Skill Club Next Gen league. I've gone and included proof of my achievements in:

	A F-Zero X			K Majora's Mask	
	B ISS 2000			L GoldenEye 007	
	C Battle for Naboo			M Perfect Dark	
	D Super Mario 64			N Banjo-Tooie	
	E Conker's BFD			O Tony Hawk's	
	F Lylat Wars			P Mario Tennis	
	G Quake II			Q TWINE	
	H Wave Race 64			R WWF No Mercy	
	I Ridge Racer 64			S Smash Bros	
	J Mario Kart 64			T Excitebike 64	

ENTRY FORM

Please send my badge and certificate to:

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

....

....

Use a photocopy of this form if you'd rather not cut your copy of NGC Magazine.

challenge A — F-Zero X

What you must do: Beat a time of 1'50" on Port Town 2.
Proof: A photo of your time, shown on the info screen after the race.
Helpful tips: The free Double Game Guide+ stuck to issue 22 should provide you with all the help you need.

challenge B — ISS 2000



What you must do: Finish all the scenarios.
Proof: A photo of the two completed Scenario screens.
Helpful tips: Tips ahoy in the DGG+ attached to issue 49, *and* the 'Best of 2000' book that came free with issue 51.

challenge C — Battle for Naboo

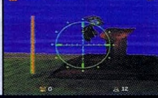
What you must do: Earn Gold Medals on all 18 levels – that includes the three secret missions.
Proof: A photo of the player select screen, showing how many medals you've collected.
Helpful tips: Why, there was a DGG+ free with **N64**/57.

challenge D — Super Mario 64



What you must do: Beat 0'13" on the Princess' Slide.
Proof: A photo of your time at the finish line.
Helpful tips: For a massive shortcut, press Z and B just before you hit the slide – then, after the tunnel, leap left over the wall and use B to bellyflop onto the track below. Yikes.

challenge E — Conker's Bad Fur Day



What you must do: Score 10 headshots against CPU-controlled Frenchies in the Beach multiplayer scenario.
Proof: A photo of the final stats screen, showing your score.
Helpful tips: No multiplayer tips as such, but try the walkthroughs in issues 54 and 55 for general advice.



challenge F — Lylat Wars

What you must do: All rings and 70 hits on the Training mode, *before* entering the all-range mode arena.
Proof: Pause the game as you pass through the final ring and take a photo.
Helpful tips: **N64**/8's free poster, or the DGG+ on issue 13.

challenge G — Quake II



What you must do: Beat 1'10" on Twists.
Proof: A photo of the stats screen, please, which pops up as soon as you finish the level.
Helpful tips: All manner of tips are to be found in **N64**/33.

challenge H — Wave Race 64



What you must do: Beat a score of 66,000 on Stunt Mode at Dolphin Park.
Proof: A photo of the stats screen, showing your score.
Helpful tips: **N64**/2's your man, along with the torrent of tips featured in the DGG+ stuck to the front of issue 14.

challenge I — Ridge Racer 64



What you must do: Beat a race time of 1'10" on Ridge Racer Novice.
Proof: A photo of the records screen.
Helpful tips: Mark demonstrated the perfect Ridge Racer Novice lap in **N64**/41. Get to it!

challenge J — Mario Kart 64



What you must do: Beat a time of 2'20" (PAL) or 2'09" (NTSC) on Bowser's Castle.
Proof: A picture of the records screen, showing your time.
Helpful tips: Try the unnervingly helpful review in issue 4, the tips in issue 5, or the DGG+ attached to issue 13.

challenge K — Zelda: Majora's Mask



What you must do: Win the Fierce Deity's mask – by collecting all the other masks, then finishing the game.
Proof: An in-game photo, showing Link in Fierce Deity form (you'll need to be in a boss arena).
Helpful tips: A handy book on **N64**/50, and tips in issue 52.

challenge L — GoldenEye 007



What you must do: Survive the Cradle on 00 Agent difficulty for 15 minutes.
Proof: A photo of the Mission Complete screen, clearly showing your time.
Helpful tips: Tips in **N64**/10, plus the DGG+ from issue 12.

challenge M — Perfect Dark



What you must do: Unlock all the cheats. That's a grand total of 43 cheats for you to collect…
Proof: Photographs of all the cheat menus – six in all.
Helpful tips: Tips in issues 44, 45 and 46, and the book that came bundled with issue 46.

challenge N — Banjo-Tooie



What you must do: Collect all 90 jiggies.
Proof: A photo of the information contained in the game's pause screen.
Helpful tips: Everything you need to know is wrapped up in the book given away free with issue 55.

challenge O — Tony Hawk's Skateboarding

What you must do: Unlock Officer Dick by collecting all thirty tapes and winning every medal.
Proof: A photo of *Tony's* Character Select screen with Dick clearly visible.
Helpful tips: Alan fashioned a full guide in **N64**/42.

challenge P — Mario Tennis



What you must do: Complete the horrifyingly difficult Planet Cup with all 16 characters.
Proof: A photo of the Player Select screen showing the CPU difficulty as 'Hard' (unlocked after doing the challenge.)
Helpful tips: Check out Dr Kitts' DGG+, as seen on issue 48.

challenge Q — The World is Not Enough



What you must do: Finish the game on 00 Agent difficulty.
Proof: A photo of the multiplayer select screen, clearly showing 'Golden Gun Mode' (which is unlocked when you complete *TWINE* on 00 Agent).
Helpful tips: Tips in issue 50, plus the DGG+ with issue 52.

challenge R — WWF No Mercy



What you must do: Defeat at least 100 opponents in Survival mode.
Proof: A photo of the final stats screen, showing your wins.
Helpful tips: A splendid tips guide in issue 50, and the DGG+ taped to the cover of **N64**/52.

challenge S — Super Smash Bros



What you must do: Finish the game with a score of more than 1,000,000 points.
Proof: A photo of the Character Select screen – hold the glove over your character to display the high score.
Helpful tips: Issue 37's guide lays bare the scoring system.

challenge T — Excitebike 64



What you must do: Unlock *Excite-3D* – which is done by winning the final Challenge Pro championship.
Proof: A photo of the Special Tracks Select screen.
Helpful tips: Stuck to the front of issue 57 was a DGG+ overflowing with *Excitebike 64* tippery.

HALL OF FAME

PLATINUM Club
complete 14 challenges

Dan Masters, *Australia*	*A, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T*

GOLD Club
complete 10 challenges

Jamie Hobbs, *Thetford*	*D, E, F, J, K, L, M, N, P, S*
Justin Badger, *Wolverhampton*	*A, E, F, H, I, J, K, L, N, P, S*
Joseph Murphy, *Co. Cork*	*A, B, E, F, I, K, L, N, S, T*

SILVER Club
complete 7 challenges

Arif Mollah, *Rochdale*	*C, D, J, K, L, M, Q*
Demot Ryan, *Co. Westmeath*	*E, F, K, L, M, N, S*
Chris Lowe, *Tyne & Wear*	*C, E, F, I, K, L, Q*
Giorgio Venturino, *Turin*	*E, F, I, K, L, N, S*
Damien Plumb, *Cambridge*	*K, L, M, N, O, P, Q*
Tony Dunster, *London*	*A, D, F, J, K, L, M*
Bruce Thomson, *Edinburgh*	*A, H, I, J, K, L, Q*

BRONZE Club
complete 3 challenges or more

Chris Smith, *Leeds*	*E, P, R*
Michael Rose, *Netherlands*	*C, L, S*
Patrick King, *Norwich*	*C, P, R*
James Talbot-Hammond, *Nantwich*	*C, Q, R*
Janne Kaitila, *Edinburgh*	*C, N, S*
Thomas Barrett, *East Kilbride*	*N, P, S*
Nader Kohbodi, *Anglesey*	*E, L, S*
Andrew Duffy, *Ayrshire*	*C, K, S*
Peter Shrubsall, *Surrey*	*B, P, S*
Alex McIve, *Lanarkshire*	*G, R, S*
Mark Quayle, *Australia*	*C, H, L*
Luke Wilson, *Dublin*	*N, P, S*
David Cathrine, *London*	*L, R, S*
Michael Oakes, *Harpenden*	*E, F, K, L, S, T*
Tony Dunster, *Anglesey*	*B, P, S*
Guy Taylor, *Kingston-upon-Thames*	*C, L, S*
Gary Brawn, *Bromley*	*H, N, P*
James Firman, *St Albans*	*K, L, S*
The Nameless One, *Australia*	*C, N, R*
Alexander Davies, *Newport Pagnell*	*L, S, T*
Colin White, *Derbyshire*	*F, K, N, S*
Johan Lubbers, *Netherlands*	*E, K, N*
Bruce Thomson, *Edinburgh*	*A, J, Q*
Andrew Foster, *Ilkley*	*K, L, P*
Joe Sullivan, *Isle of Wight*	*E, L, P*
Ryan Devitt, *Romford*	*A, D, F*
David Jedrzejewski, *Australia*	*F, K, L, N, O, S*
Alex Buck, *Stockport*	*K, N, S*
Alex McIver, *Edinburgh*	*K, N, S*
Alexander Dudok de Wit, *London*	*K, P, S*
Mark Nisbet, *Ayrshire*	*A, B, I*
Andrew Simmonds, *Hampshire*	*A, D, G, H, K, L*
Robin Bradley, *Basingstoke*	*L, Q, T*
Barry Gannon, *Caithness*	*E, F, K, L, N, S*
Abdulaziz Hassan, *London*	*I, O, S*
Andrew Hannay, *Shrewsbury*	*F, K, N, S*
Robert Cashman, *Co. Waterford*	*I, K, L*





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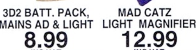
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NGC's ultimate buying guide

DIRECTORY

We reveal the N64 games you should be splashing out on this new year.



NGC TOP 10 ACTION ADVENTURE GAMES

1 Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Nintendo • £50 • 98%



Simply the greatest game ever created on *any* format, *Ocarina of Time* is a game so full of majestic, jaw-dropping moments it'll probably bring you to tears. Absolute genius.

2 Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask
Nintendo • £50 • 96%



Another supreme example of Nintendo at their greatest, *Majora's Mask* is rich and inventive with enough intricate puzzles and heart-rending moments to blow your brain clean open.

3 Shadowman
Acclaim • £40 • 93%



As black as the night, *Shadowman* is grisly adventuring at its most disturbing. Vast, believable worlds, a superb plot, five gruesome serial killers and a dash of voodoo make this totally unmissable.

4 Body Harvest
Infogrames • £20 • 91%
Crap-looking but ultra-playable shooter.

5 Resident Evil 2
Virgin • £40 • 90%
Super-scary, if short-lived, zombie finery.

6 Duke Nukem: Zero Hour
Infogrames • £40 • 90%
Violent, enjoyable third-person blasting.

7 Star Wars: Rogue Squadron
Nintendo • £40 • 85%
Tremendously good space combat fun.

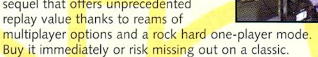
8 Operation Winback
Virgin • £40 • 83%
Looks ropey, but this is top stealth action.

9 Hybrid Heaven
Konami • £40 • 83%
Niggly sci-fi RPG with ingenious battle system.

10 Star Wars: Battle for Naboo
THQ • £40 • 78%
Not perfect, but a tasty space shooter.

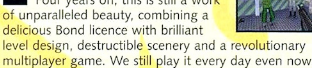
NGC TOP 10 SHOOT-'EM-UPS

1 Perfect Dark
Rare • £50 • 96%



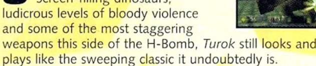
Absolutely stunning *GoldenEye* sequel that offers unprecedented replay value thanks to reams of multiplayer options and a rock hard one-player mode. Buy it immediately or risk missing out on a classic.

2 GoldenEye 007
Rare • £30 • 94%



Four years on, this is still a work of unparalleled beauty, combining a delicious Bond licence with brilliant level design, destructible scenery and a revolutionary multiplayer game. We still play it every day even now.

3 Turok
Acclaim • £30 • 91%



Screen-filling dinosaurs, ludicrous levels of bloody violence and some of the most staggering weapons this side of the H-Bomb, *Turok* still looks and plays like the sweeping classic it undoubtedly is.

4 Turok 2
Acclaim • £40 • 95%
Gorgeously playable, if flawed, dino-blaster.

5 Lylat Wars
Nintendo • £30 • 91%
Miyamoto-influenced space shoot-'em-up. Yum.

6 Jet Force Gemini
Rare • £40 • 93%
Ace looks, hectic blasting, guts all over the shop.

7 Quake II
Activision • £40 • 90%
Surprisingly ace multiplayer action. 'Chekkit'.

8 The World is Not Enough
EA • £40 • 88%
Annoying but enjoyably action-packed Bondage.

9 Rainbow Six
Take 2 • £40 • 87%
Short-lived but complex stealth-'em-up. Beaut.

10 Turok: Rage Wars
Acclaim • £40 • 87%
Deathmatch-based blasting that works a treat.

NGC TOP 10 BEAT-'EM-UPS

1 Super Smash Bros
Nintendo • £40 • 90%



Immaculate, beautifully playable, multi-platformed fighting game with Nintendo characters beating the living daylights out of each other. Nab three mates and it gets even better.

2 WWF No Mercy
THQ • £40 • 92%



The biggest and best rasslin' game ever made, improving on its predecessors by upping the pace, moves, options and violence. You can even scrap it out in the dressing rooms.

3 Fighters Destiny
Infogrames • £40 • 86%



Gorgeous animation, likeable characters (including a cow) and bone-shattering moves make this a worthy contender to the likes of *Tekken*. Go forth, kick people, and crush skulls.

4 WWF Wrestlemania 2000
THQ • £40 • 90%
Playable, comprehensive, fat-man fighting.

5 WWF Attitude
Acclaim • £40 • 88%
Hi-res, combo-led ring sting. Get amongst it.

6 Mortal Kombat 4
Infogrames • £40 • 84%
Rip off someone's leg and beat 'em to death with it.

7 Xena: Warrior Princess
Titus • £40 • 81%
Surprisingly good four-player prang-'em-up.

8 Rakuga Kids
Konami • £40 • 80%
Weird but great 2D graffiti beat-'em-up.

9 Bio Freaks
Infogrames • £40 • 76%
Gorgeous and bloody, if a little shallow.

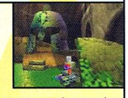
10 WCW/NWO Revenge
THQ • £40 • £75%
Shuffling, slow fighters, plenty of moves.

NGC TOP 10 PLATFORM GAMES

1 Super Mario 64
Nintendo • £30 • 96%
The sort of game that'll have you thanking your Mum she gave birth to you: a vast, magnificent spectacle, refined down to the most intricate detail, *Mario 64* is *still* breathtaking.



2 Donkey Kong 64
Rare • £60 (with Expansion Pak) • 93%
It's *Banjo-Kazooie+*, but who cares? An absolutely awesome platformer, combining massive exploration with eye-frazzling visuals and some likeable, if frightening, characters.



3 Rocket: Robot on Wheels
Ubi Soft • £40 • 88%
The most original, inventive, downright playable platformer you'll encounter in a long, long time, *Rocket* just gets better the more you play it. If you can find a copy, snap it up now.

4 Banjo-Kazooie
Rare • £40 • 92%
Rare's platform mastery strikes again. 'Wick'.

5 Mystical Ninja featuring Goemon
Konami • £40 • 90%
Sprawling, enjoyable, ker-razy adventure.

6 Conker's Bad Fur Day
Rare • £40 • 89%
Swearing, wazzing, platforming. What a combo.

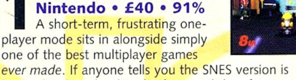
7 Yoshi's Story
Nintendo • £40 • 86%
Not a lot of longevity, but superbly playable.

8 Banjo-Tooie
Rare • £45 • 81%
Old hat, but still huge and fabulously good fun.

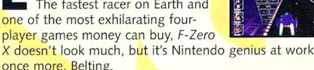
9 Mischief Makers
Nintendo • £40 • 90%
Retro-tastic 2D level-hopping brilliance.

10 Glover
Hasbro • £40 • 83%
Sold all of two copies, but this is superbly odd.

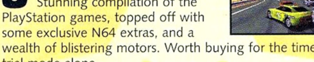
NGC TOP 10 RACING GAMES



1 Mario Kart 64
Nintendo • £40 • 91%
A short-term, frustrating one-player mode sits in alongside simply one of the best multiplayer games *ever made*. If anyone tells you the SNES version is better, hit them hard in the face until they faint.



2 F-Zero X
Nintendo • £40 • 91%
The fastest racer on Earth and one of the most exhilarating four-player games money can buy, *F-Zero X* doesn't look much, but it's Nintendo genius at work once more. Belting.



3 Ridge Racer 64
Nintendo • £40 • 91%
Stunning compilation of the PlayStation games, topped off with some exclusive N64 extras, and a wealth of blistering motors. Worth buying for the time trial mode alone.

4 Diddy Kong Racing
Rare • £40 • 90%
A fantastic adventure-racer, but not quite *MK64*.

5 World Driver Championship
Midway • £40 • 91%
Rock hard but utterly superb. And *so* gorgeous.

6 Top Gear Rally 2
Kemco • £40 • 90%
Brilliant rally game with a random track generator.

7 V-Rally 99
Infogrames • £40 • 90%
Fast, furious, terrific rallying, but bleedin' frustrating.

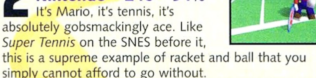
8 Top Gear Rally
Boss • £40 • 86%
Looks dump, but this is quick, realistic racing action.

9 Wipeout 64
Psygnosis • £40 • 88%
Hard but rewarding *F-Zero* alternative. Great music.

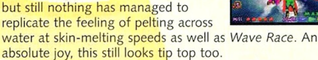
10 Beetle Adventure Racing
EA • £40 • 81%
Tons of shortcuts make this a decent outside bet.

NGC TOP 10 SPORTS GAMES

1 ISS '98
Konami • £40 • 92%
Everything that makes football so wonderful squeezed into a cartridge smaller than a Predator boot, *ISS '98* is a majestic, nigh-on-flawless recreation of The Beautiful Game.



2 Mario Tennis
Nintendo • £40 • 91%
It's Mario, it's tennis, it's absolutely gobsmackingly ace. Like *Super Tennis* on the SNES before it, this is a supreme example of racket and ball that you simply cannot afford to go without.



3 Wave Race 64
Nintendo • £40 • 90%
It might be as old as the hills, but still nothing has managed to replicate the feeling of pelting across water at skin-melting speeds as well as *Wave Race*. An absolute joy, this still looks tip top too.

4 1080° Snowboarding
Nintendo • £40 • 89%
Takes a while to get into, but this is champion.

5 Mario Golf
Nintendo • £40 • 90%
Don't like golf? You will now – thwack!

6 Excitebike 64
Nintendo • £45 • 90%
Delicious handling, top tracks, plus a heap of extras.

7 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Acclaim • £50 • 90%
Pukka plank-riding with the ollie-pulling OAP.

8 F1 World Grand Prix
Nintendo • £40 • 93%
Astonishingly realistic and visually stunning.

9 International Track & Field 2000
Konami • £40 • 86%
Impressive update of classic button-basher.

10 Michael Owen's WLS 2000
THQ • £40 • 84%
Silky smooth, goal-drenched football game.

NGC TOP 5 MISCELLANEOUS GAMES



1 Pilotwings 64
Nin. • £30 • 89%
Wonderfully innovative flight sim. Remarkable for two reasons: you dictate want you want to do and where, and it's even better now than before.



2 Pokémon Stadium 2
Nin. • £50 • 90%
Battle all the *Red*, *Blue*, *Gold* and *Silver* Pokémon in ace 3D. Infinite replayability and a bundle of smart minigames.



3 Paper Mario
Nin. • £40 • 90%
A 'true' RPG – despite appearances – *Paper Mario* is relatively simple but huge and amusing, and as inventive and engrossing as any Big N game.



4 Blast Corps
Rare • £30 • 88%
Startlingly original and thoroughly enjoyable, everyone forgot about Rare's first N64 game. Our advice? Get yourself reacquainted.



5 Pokémon Puzzle League
Nin. • £40 • 89%
Top notch tile-matching Poképuzzler.





You write, we answer

MAILBOX

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Text message: 07764 175921
Write: Mailbox @ NGC Magazine

STAR LETTER

'CONTEMPT'

I've got a mate who works in HMV and he tells me that they've not received anything from Nintendo with regard to the Gamecube – unlike Microsoft and the Xbox. Apparently, Gatesy and co were in contact with retailers as early as last summer. Doesn't this suggest to you that Gamecube has no hope of making spring? And even if it does, none of the shops have allocated them any shelf space, so there won't be any room for them anyway... I thought it was going to be different this time, but I can see Nintendo still regard Europe with absolute contempt. When is this policy going to change?
Sam Bilson, Bangor


Gamecube hit Japan in September last year.

Probably never. What you have to accept with Nintendo is that they'll never do things someone else's way. They're not going to compete with Xbox because they don't want to compete with Xbox – and they don't see Microsoft as competition, anyway. The fact that they've made no attempt to contact retailers is frustrating, especially so because Europe always gets the bum deal with this sort of thing, but that's the way they work, and always have done. Will it make spring? Yes, but they could do with sending out some positive signals. Bless 'em, though, they make some blinkin' good games. **Ed**

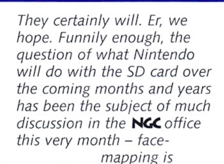


MP3s on Gamecube would be nice – if we had one to play them on.

'POSTAGE STAMP'

The other day while flicking through a gadget magazine, I noticed that Panasonic use the SD card in a lot of their other multimedia products, not just the Gamecube as I originally thought. Apparently it can be used in a whole bunch of new mini-MP3 players, on watches, and a host of other things. It can also be used in digital cameras and video cameras. Does this mean the reintroduction of the hallowed "put your face on a *Perfect Dark* deathmatch character" option in *PD2*? And can we expect a GC-specific MP3 server if and when it goes online? The possibilities for the expansion of this postage stamp-sized card are endless when combined with Gamecube. Will The Big N take heed?
Jason Toher, via email

They certainly will. Er, we hope. Funnily enough, the question of what Nintendo will do with the SD card over the coming months and years has been the subject of much discussion in the NGC *office this very month – face-mapping is certainly a possibility, but we wouldn't count on seeing it used in PD2. We've been harping on about a site full of MP3s for months – imagine downloading the soundtrack to your favourite game. What a winner.* **Ed**





TXT US

Use modern technology to get us on the move...





DU DA ZOMBIE ZZZZZZ0000000 MMMBBBIIIIIE mark lee

zelda is gonna ruuuule no matter what it looks like from wayne

the nu zelda looks rubbish. put it in the bin love hezza x

new link is a cross between a monkey and a powerpuff girl. coopz

rob the useless robot lives on! look at lylat wars + dinosaur planet. from mouldeus

u call that a joke?! frm prince of fools

super circuit & wario 4 r top notch! from bug

luv the new mag keep up the good work frm sam

ngc is beast well beast

HAS SHIGSY BEEN HT ON THE EAD? COXY

ngc rules! starfox looks like its gonna be class! and all smash bros characters look

amazin! -Jam-

cant wait for GC. GOT a date?

'HAMBURGERS'

Hope you like our Dr Kitts photos. We took a look at some back issues and decided to act out some of the good Doctor's most unusual quirks – such as 'Dr Kitts wakes up from a dream of little kittens and hamburgers' from issue 52. Don't have nightmares!
Gabe and Jay, Hereford

We showed the real Dr Kitts. He said something about steaming your face off with his favourite iron. **Ed**



Is this "Dr Kitts swings from a tree in his surgery"?

Dr Kitts wakes up from his kitten-related dream.

'FREE WORLD'

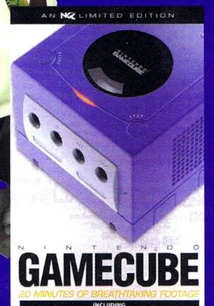
I was browsing the internet late one night when suddenly to my surprise I came across a rather amusing song by my favourite metal band System of a Down. It's dedicated to Link and Zelda. Most of SOAD's lyrics are against political aggression and poverty, but to be honest I fail to see what Zelda has done for the free world. Anyway, I've sent you through the song.
Greg Thomas, via email

'SPECULATION'

So, I've read with interest the speculation about Rare going multi-format on the internet. I seem to remember this rumour surfacing before, but back then the evidence wasn't as compelling: having Xbox and PS2-shaped Christmas presents on a card from an exclusive Nintendo developer is about as obvious a message as I think I've ever seen. Why else include them – and why incur the wrath of Nintendo if discussions hadn't already taken place? Can you imagine a future for Nintendo without Rare games being exclusive to their console? You're taking away a major reason to invest in a Gamecube. In fact, you might even be taking away *the* major reason for buying a Gamecube when you consider Rare's output over the past five years. Please tell me that this isn't going to happen. NGC
Ben Sanderson, Manchester

We'd like to... but we can't. The Christmas card certainly surprised us, but at the end of the day, it's only that: a Christmas card. And remember who's responsible for it – Rare have always liked a cheeky little joke or two, especially when it gets people talking about them. Having said that, going multi-format would earn the Twycross outfit a stack of extra cash and, if that was the reasoning behind any future decision, it would be difficult to blame them. Still, we reckon it's highly unlikely for the time being, seeing as Rare have four (confirmed) Gamecube games in the works. **Ed**

CORRECTION CORNER



You're wrong by saying that Twycross is in Leicestershire. It's actually just, *just* over the border in Warwickshire. I know this because of Twycross Zoo – the best zoo in the whole world.
Stephen Carvell, via email

Zoo could be right, there. Ha! ZOO could be right. You know, ZOO instead of... oh, never mind. **Ed**

Your issue 60 video, then. Excellent, despite the fact it had '**N64** Issue 60 Nov. Video' printed on the cassette when you'd just renamed the mag NGC. Nit picking, but it was a chance to be in your fab mag.
Chris Bartlett, via email

We hoped someone would notice that deliberate mistake. (Cough). **Ed**

In NGC/63 you called the first N64 *Zelda* game *Zelda OTT*. Shouldn't that be *OOT*, seeing as how the game is *Ocarina of Time*?
Niall Sherry, via email

Er, yes, probably. **Ed**

Last month, you spelled the French phrase Tres Bon, "Tray Bons".
Michael Lawrence, Hull

Yes. We did. **Ed**

BONUS LETTERS

I am interested in what you show.
Elliott Richards, Basildon

What we show. Hmm. **Ed**

This is a betrayal of everything we have come to expect.
Hollie Bailey, via email

Expect nothing and you won't feel betrayed. **Ed**

I hope Nintendo pay more attention to us from now on.
David Jacobs, Berkshire

Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. Nice one. **Ed**

And so I ask: is this true?
Matthew Woof, Leamington Spa

And so I reply: no. **Ed**

Mark's got a funny-shaped head.
Michael Deerz, Holland

Yep. **Ed**

Plus, he has nice legs.
Kim D, High Wycombe

Is this Greener again? **Ed**

Never have I seen my idol in paper shape.
Neil Rescorla, Cornwall

That is pretty unusual, we've got to admit. **Ed**

Any chance you could give us a smile?
Mark Symons, Cardiff

There we go. **Ed**

Can you please...
Robbie Salton, Edinburgh

Please...? **Ed**

Someone please tell me where my head has gone.
Stuart Edwards, Bristol

? **Ed**

Q is for Quiet.
Peter Bilsow, Liverpool

And F is for Phone. **Ed**

Zelda. Mario. Banjo. Gex.
Grant Wilkinson, Grimsby

Every one a classic. **Ed**

GRINTENDO

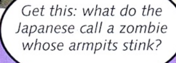
Win a game of your choice! All you have to do is tell us a Nintendo-related joke – and make us laugh. This month: **Tom Worthington** of **Aberfoyle**



Tim gathers an excited **NGC** team around for this month's 'joke'. Pandemonium reigns.



Once the rabble are quiet, he gets going...



The team have to concede that they just don't know.

A **B.O. Hazard!**

A gentle titter of laughter from everyone. Except Paul, who says he doesn't see the relevance to surfing.



GOOD, BUT NOT QUITE GOOD ENOUGH. UNLUCKY, TOM!

Got a great Nintendo-related joke? Then write to us at Grintendo, Mailbox, **NGC** Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW or alternatively email ngc@futurenet.co.uk putting **Grintendo** in the subject line.

Angry nu-metallers SOAD hate nearly everything – except Zelda.

*Interesting. We're only sorry other **NGC** readers can't hear it. However, you can catch up with the song at SOAD's website – and what an eye-opener it is. It's hard to believe a song dedicated to Link and Zelda could sit alongside a song with a chorus that goes: "My tapeworm tells me where to go/Pull the tapeworm out of your ass, Hey/ Pull the tapeworm out of your ass, Hey/ Pull the tapeworm out of your ass, Hey." Just remarkable.* **Ed**

'FRUIT'

Q. What is Princess Peach's favourite fruit? A. Onions!
Dave Rawlings, Plymouth

Technically this should be one for Grintendo, but what the hell... **Ed**

'20 COPIES'

In **NGC**/64, Andy Ireland asked why Rare don't vary their output and do more games like *Blast Corps* and *Jet Force Gemini*. Isn't it obvious? Both of those sold about 20 copies – *Banjo* and *DK* sold loads.
Gary Lacker, Bromley

I think you're being a little optimistic with those sales figures. **Ed**



Jet Force: loved by some, hated by Shigsy.

SO TELL ME THIS

Will their be an *F-Zero* follow up on GC? If so, do you reckon it will give you the option to design your own cars and tracks from scratch?
Jamie Moorie, Newcastle

It's a fairly safe bet to assume it's on the backburner somewhere, but *F-Zero X* sold about three copies, so Nintendo are likely to concentrate their attention on their 'biggies', like *Mario*, *Zelda*, *Mario Kart* and, to a lesser extent, *Metroid*, before tossing the likes of *F-Zero* into the mix. We'll keep you posted if our spies tell us anything.

1. Will there be an RPG mode on Gamecube's version of *ISS*?
2. What happened to Mario and Luigi growing up for Gamecube?
Andrew Simmonds, Hampshire

1. Wouldn't count on it. The RPG mode was inspired but, ultimately, dull – and Konami knew it. We expect developers Major A to concentrate on the football side of things this time.
2. Weeeell... there wasn't much evidence of it in either *Luigi's Mansion* or the demo of *Mario Sunshine* at Spaceworld last year. But, Miyamoto reinforced the message in an interview recently that Mazza would be growing up in *Sunshine*, so we'll have to wait and see. Though, if rumours about *Sunshine* doing a swap with the new *Zelda* and becoming 2D-ish are to be believed, you might not see adult Mazza even then.

1. When is *Phantasy Star Online* out?
2. Any more Sega originals likely to turn up on Gamecube any time soon?
Mark Campbell, Solihull

1. March in Japan, the last we heard. Won't take much translating to English so expect a US release shortly after and then autumn time for it here.
2. Just the one so far. *Soccer Slam* (see page 6) is heading this way, plus there's rumours of a couple of others too. Beyond that, it's translations of old and new favourites, including – fingers crossed – *Jet Set Radio*.



GAMECUBE LAB

How does Gamecube work? We'll examine a new piece of the miracle machine in every issue. This month...



GBA LINK CABLE

NEW LOOK!



If you've been living in a nuclear bunker for the last few months, the link cable's new look might come as a shock. When Nintendo testers reported that the old-style cable was liable to slip out of the GBA port at inopportune moments, the new, bulkier design was created to allow room for those two tiny clamps.

Remember the N64's Transfer Pak? That peripheral – which allowed primitive transfer of data between the N64 and a Game Boy cart – has been taken to the next level with the GC-GBA link cable, a device that allows Nintendo's two newest machines to get intimate. But how does it work? Read on…

PLUGGING IT IN

So you've got your Cube, you've got your GBA, and a nifty piece of wire with which to connect the two – but it's not as straightforward as it sounds. Well, actually, it is…

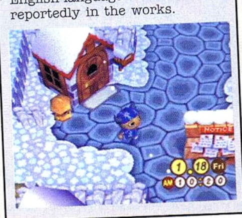
From this fairly innocuous box comes what Nintendo would have us believe is the future of gaming. It's easily plugged in: one end fits snugly into Gamecube controller port two, while the other goes into GBA's expansion port. The two small clips clamp the cable securely to the Advance – so securely, in fact, that you need to fiddle with those odd blue prongs on top to loosen it when you've had enough GC-GBA action.





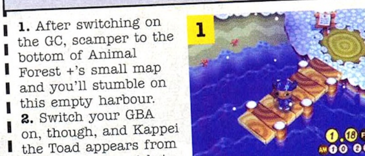
ANIMAL WHAT?

Animal Forest + is a Gamecube remix of a Japan-only N64 game, which we reviewed back in NGC/56. It's a 'communication game' from Shigeru Miyamoto himself, where the aim is simply to run around the forest, chatting to animals and generally living your little animal life. We haven't reviewed the GC version yet – there's simply too much Japanese text – but we'll slowly sussing it out. An English-language version is reportedly in the works.

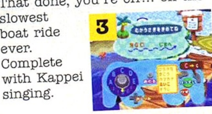


GAMECUBE, MEET GBA

Once your GBA and Gamecube are hooked up, find yourself a link-compatible Gamecube game, such as Animal Forest + here, and away you go.



1. After switching on the GC, scamper to the bottom of Animal Forest +'s small map and you'll stumble on this empty harbour.
2. Switch your GBA on, though, and Kappei the Toad appears from nowhere in his rickety little boat. Hello there!
3. Kappei will check your link cable's working properly – it takes a couple of seconds – then you name the island you're about to visit.
4. Inventively, we've christened it 'NGC Island'. That done, you're off… on the slowest boat ride ever. Complete with Kappei singing.





HOLIDAY ON NGC ISLAND

After Kappei's finally finished warbling about his boat and docked at the island, you can explore the place to your heart's content. There's not really that much to do – change the island's flag, visit your second house, shake the trees and grab a load of kumquats – but you can have a chat with the island's sole inhabitant, Michiru the blue bird. But the real action starts when you head back to the boat and tell Kappei you'd like to continue playing on the GBA.







TURN OFF



It's all very well tinkering with Animal Island on your GBA, but if you switch the power off, the data is lost, because the little handheld lacks on-board memory. Nintendo are planning to release a GBA cart containing a small RAM chip alongside upcoming GC title Flippin' Kirby, which will save data and games downloaded from the Gamecube. That's fine, but for now the lack of memory is a huge limitation to the idea of taking bits of Gamecube games with you on the train.

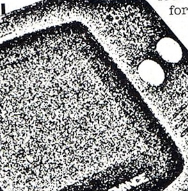
FUTURE USES

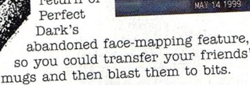
The GBA link cable has huge potential for multi-platform craziness – here's some stuff that's in the pipeline...



SCREEN SWAPPING In Flippin' Kirby, you'll roll around on the TV screen – until you drop down a hole, upon which play will switch to the Game Boy Advance's screen. Clever stuff.

PERSONAL DISPLAY One of the ideas trumpeted by Nintendo when the link cable was first announced. In, for example, multiplayer Metroid Prime, imagine four GBA screens displaying a private radar for each player.





FACE MAP The Pocket Camera is compatible with GBA – we'd like to see the return of Perfect Dark's abandoned face-mapping feature, so you could transfer your friends' mugs and then blast them to bits.



POCKET PAINTING



There's a couple of hedgehogs living in Animal Forest + – the Able Sisters – who design and manufacture umbrellas and clothes. Have a chat with them with the link lead plugged in, and you'll be allowed to use the GBA to create the decoration for a new product, which you can then buy. We created a staggeringly inept version of the NGC logo, and wandered around town advertising the magazine. Brilliant!

POCKET ISLAND

After around 30 seconds of downloading time, you'll have a GBA version of the island on-screen. Let's play!



1. Look – the island is re-created on your GBA screen in amazing detail, right down to the shells lying on the small beach. Sadly, though, the flag you hoisted up in the Gamecube Animal Forest doesn't match the one on the Advance.

2. Using the on-screen cursor, you can bring Michiru out of his house. He'll follow the hand if he's in a good mood – guide him to a tree and the little fella will knock down some fruit and gobble it up. That makes him happy.

3. And, er, that's about it. Every so often, a strawberry will float slowly over the island, but we haven't worked out how to grab hold of it yet. We know that if you do manage it, the bounty's worth a packet back in the forest.

4. Choose to leave the island and the GBA will attempt to transfer any fruit you nabbed back to the Gamecube version – and Michiru's mood in Animal Forest + will reflect how you treated him on GBA. Bizarre.



IDEAS FACTORY

Q DO NINTENDO VIEW EUROPE WITH A DEEP, MALICIOUS HATRED?



PAL and NTSC make a game hard to release simultaneously – unless that game is Ocarina of Time, of course.



So Geraint, do they really just hate us? No, they plainly don't. They just know they can get more money elsewhere. America's bigger, and Nintendo has always done very well over there – therefore they want to milk it for all it's worth. This means we have to wait while they put all their resources into that territory, and worry about the UK and the rest of Europe later. And when Gamecube does launch over here, you know it'll be with a sufficiently ground-shuddering wallop.

What do you reckon, Dan? You know, Nintendo have been around for over a hundred years, and I always get the impression that they have this really archaic view of the cutthroat world of business and marketing. They seem to view Gamecube more as a work of art than as a money-making exercise, and feel snubbed by all these rival consoles, like PlayStation, that have rubbed their faces in the dirt in Europe in the past. They give the impression they're cutting off their nose to spite their face over here, and they think that if they just ignore PlayStation 2 and Xbox, they'll go away. It's plainly not that simple.

What's happening in Paul's world, then? Although Nintendo clearly want to keep gamers happy, they apparently also want to keep the three markets – Japan, the US and Europe – entirely separate, so they can make as much money from each as possible. Using the NTSC/PAL difference to explain the delay to consoles and games stinks – *Ocarina of Time* proved that simultaneous worldwide launches are entirely feasible. I often wonder if Nintendo really do mind the 'soft launch' that their consoles enjoy through the UK import market. They're making money that way, after all.

Greener, tell us what's really going on. I think it's a case of Nintendo of Europe – and Nintendo UK – needing to be given more autonomy. Nintendo of Japan are control freaks who want to keep their eye on all three markets simultaneously, but if they actually *listened* to what the European territories want – fewer delays, more advertising, earlier launches – and gave Europe and the UK the power to make their own decisions, things would be much rosier.

A UK launch is going to need a killer app such as Rogue Leader to convert the masses.

Interesting. Tim, any thoughts? Nintendo don't actually have any *feelings* as such – they just view Europe as the third market. Lord alone knows why, because Europe is actually a bigger market than both the US and Japan – maybe it's because Sony's gained so much ground over here in recent years, and Nintendo see it as something of a lost cause. The thing is, Gamecube will be 100 quid cheaper than Xbox and about the same price as the ageing PS2 when it arrives Spring time, and if Nintendo can get games like *Rogue Leader* up and running in the shops when launch day finally arrives, the punters should be swayed.

Europe: inoffensive land mass, or traitorous PS-buying scum who deserve to be punished?

NOW IT'S YOUR CHANCE!

Well, you've read our thoughts, but what do YOU think Nintendo's attitude towards Europe is? What in tarnation are they playing at? Any interesting suggestions as to what should be done to Nintendo's management? We'll put the most interesting answers in Reader's Forum in two month's time. Send 'em in to Ideas Factory, NGC, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW or email ngc@futurenet.co.uk.

LAST TIME
IN IDEAS FACTORY WE ASKED YOU...

Q NINTENDO'S NEW 'SHORTER GAMES' STRATEGY... GOOD IDEA OR STAB IN THE BACK?



Short and sweet's all very well – but you can't have too much of a good thing, either. Can you?

HIDDEN BENEFITS
Are Nintendo really doing this for our benefit, or is this just a clever way of making more money, quicker? Half the game means half the cost.
Sam Duncan, via email

PENNY PINCHING
I'm only 14, so I can't really afford to buy many new games. So I've always liked titles like *Zelda* that provide hours of gaming. The new strategy is nothing more than a way to squeeze cash out of gamers, which is a tactic I wouldn't have expected from Nintendo.
Niall Sherry, via email

TIME, PLEASE!
Nintendo could spend more time on making great games which last more than 25 hours – and the gaps between their own releases could be filled with titles from Rare, Sega and all the other Gamecube developers.
David Austin, via email



Nintendo might have given up doing Zelda-length epics, but there's still the likes of Rare and Sega to look to.

DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY
Nintendo's new 'short-but-sweet' strategy is both surprising and disappointing. The long games are exactly what I love about Nintendo! I played *Ocarina of Time* for hours and hours, every single day – the game was so massive, I was totally sucked into the world of Link. Most gamers either don't want or can't afford to buy a new game every month – they buy a game every half-year or so, and put all their cash into huge games that will last them the full six months. But my last word would be: don't worry. I'm sure that not every Nintendo game will be so short. And even if they are, we've still got Rare – *Dinosaur Planet* has been in development for ages and looks absolutely enormous.
Eskil Vestre, Norway

WASTE OF MONEY
I am *appalled* at Nintendo's 'shorter games' strategy. It isn't children who spend the most money on games, it's teenagers like myself – and I am not prepared to waste £50 on a disc that will only last me a few weeks.
James Batchelor, via email

ON THE LINE
The increasing brevity of Nintendo's games isn't the only problem as far as I see it – the increasing linearity could be far worse. In *Mario 64* and *Ocarina of Time*, the player had free reign to do what they wanted, in whatever order. This made even third or fourth plays unique. Nowadays, the pattern seems to be shifting towards increasingly linear play – *Luigi's Mansion*'s room-by-room nature, for example. I'm not against change or anything, but what's the point of messing with a near-flawless formula?
Matthew Wright, via email

WHO CARES?
Look – just don't worry about it. If all your games were 60-plus hours long, you wouldn't be able to get them all finished anyway.
Ross Stevenson, Cornwall

BUSY DOING NOTHING
I can understand that people who have busy lives may want a shorter game that they can finish in a couple of hours. But would you rather come home and complete another 'chapter' of a Nintendo epic, or spend a few hours repeating a game you've already completed, looking for odd coins scattered around a level?
Andrew Hyland, Accrington

MONTHS, NOT DAYS
I finished *Luigi's Shed* in the three minutes it took to nuke my microwave pizza. I want to lose weeks and months putting ghosts into bottles, not just a few days sucking them up with a vacuum cleaner.
Tony Cadwallader, Grimsby

THE HORROR!
I suppose it doesn't really matter if Nintendo commit the horror of making short games, as we always have Sega to back us up with massive titles like *Skies of Arcadia*.
Invoice Fences*, via email

* Name supplied. Believe it or not.

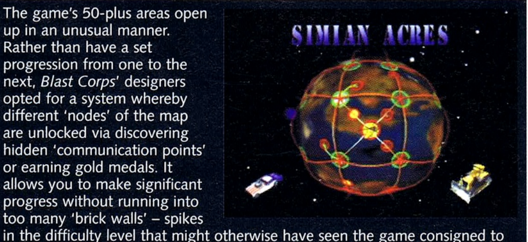
START

FINISH

If the concept of a game based around demolition brought to mind the horrors of *Rampage*, the reality of *Blast Corps* showed what the idea could do in the hands of a world-class developer. Rare reveals all...

THE MAKING OF... BLAST CO

OPEN SESAME



The game's 50-plus areas open up in an unusual manner. Rather than have a set progression from one to the next, *Blast Corps'* designers opted for a system whereby different 'nodes' of the map are unlocked via discovering hidden 'communication points' or earning gold medals. It allows you to make significant progress without running into too many 'brick walls' – spikes in the difficulty level that might otherwise have seen the game consigned to the back of the cartridge drawer.

One of the most commonly held truisms is that the simplest ideas are often the best. So when Rare co-founder Chris Stamper set his designers and code monkeys the task of producing a game based around an ingenious twist on that most modest of pleasures – smashing things to tiny pieces on a grand scale – the company had to be on to another winner.

"If you knock down buildings it will be fun," suggested Stamper, sowing the seeds for what became arguably Rare's most original and offbeat N64 title. A small team was assembled to work on fleshing out this basic concept into a game worthy of a software house that had, prior to becoming Britain's most revered developer with the release of *GoldenEye*, made its name with such huge hits as *Donkey Kong Country*, *Killer Instinct* and the seminal *Battletoads*.

School building

"We had some very talented artists and engineers who were straight out of college," reveals a member of the original seven-strong *Blast Corps* team. "I think the combination of their enthusiasm and recently honed skills enabled us to produce some pretty interesting and unique work.

"At the time it was actually the largest team any of us had worked in, so it required a greater degree of co-ordination than we were used to. Since

WHY BLAST CORPS WAS A CLASSIC

GRAPHICS Shiny metallic surfaces abound, the levels are packed with detail, and the game never slows down a jot, no matter how much is happening on screen. A great advert for the special effects hardware crammed into the N64.

BUILDINGS *Every structure in the game can be flattened, resulting in a hugely satisfying explosion. Even if it's not required in order to save the carrier, there are bonuses to be earned for turning each city into a desolate wasteland.*

PUZZLES *You can't just ram your way through every level. In general the puzzles are quite simple, but when you're trying to think about how to move a vehicle from point A to point B, and all the while you can hear the carrier's siren growing louder and louder by the second, the tension is almost unbearable.*

VEHICLES *The game features enough high-powered vehicles of destruction to fill an entire Jeremy Clarkson TV series. Bulldozers, bikes, trucks, trains, cars, robots, buggies, boats, and pretty much everything else you could possibly imagine.*

MAGIC MOMENT
J-BOMB

This giant flying robot, a firm favourite of the Blast Corps team, is one of the easiest vehicles to use, and by far the most destructive. With the ability to smash entire tower blocks in a single attack, there's no point in using any other vehicle if J-Bomb is available – hence the machine's rarity. If J-Bomb had been used as often as many players wished, the game would likely have been stripped of much of its challenge and excitement.



RPS

then, team sizes have increased dramatically, but the *Blast Corps* team was still small enough to allow for individual members to make a very obvious contribution, and also meant we stayed focused on the core elements of the game."

> **"We simply wanted a game where you knocked down a load of buildings."**

The most important of those core elements was the missile carrier which players had to protect by demolishing the many buildings that littered its path. If the carrier so much as touched an obstacle then it would trigger an apocalyptic explosion. After the carrier's path was cleared, players were able to return to level the rest of the buildings in the cities they were formerly supposed to be 'saving' from destruction. It was, admits Rare, a "completely idiotic" concept, but one that formed the heart of an exceptionally compelling game.

Vandal hearts

"The basic premise never changed throughout the project," says our *Blast Corps* insider. "We simply wanted a game where you knocked down a load of buildings. Everything really developed around this, and all the other elements were introduced to diversify the gameplay."

It was a fully formed game from a very early stage in its development, with a 'completeness' matched, among the N64's early releases, only by Nintendo's in-house work. The confident young team was never troubled by the bugbears that were encountered by many other first-wave N64 coders – such as the numerous ongoing revisions to the machine's pre-release hardware: "Things like that tend to be fairly superficial."

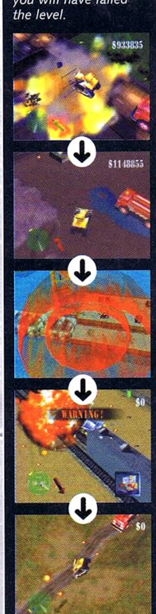
The only thing the team had any bother with, however insignificant, was the N64's radically different controller, with the analogue stick that was soon to become a standard feature on PlayStation and all subsequent console pads. "To be honest, we kind of missed the point of it at the start," admits a team member. "It wasn't until we played *Super Mario 64* that we saw the stick's potential." The designers quickly added an option to use analogue acceleration as well as the standard analogue steering.

Design demolition

Having toyed with the idea of making

MAGIC MOMENT NEAR-MISS

Having the missile carrier as a kind of mobile time limit is the game's master stroke. It means you're often forced to work within a few feet of the advancing truck, circling around it in a very fast, skittishly handling vehicle, and cutting directly across its path in order to take out chunks of scenery at the very last moment. Any minor prangs to the carrier (no doubt due to a sweaty analogue stick) are punished as severely as if it had crashed into a building – ie the unstable missiles will explode, everyone will die, and you will have failed the level.



THE NAME GAME

Blast Corps is now a familiar name among N64 players, although several alternative titles were considered and rejected for various reasons. A team member explains: "We had a hard time finding names that weren't already trademarked, and it came down to a vote between 'Blast Corps' and 'Blastdozer'. 'Blast Corps' won so we went ahead with that, only to find several months later that we couldn't use it in Japan and had to revert to *Blastdozer* for that territory. Personally, I lost interest after they rejected my idea of 'Renegade Dismantler Corps'."





OYSTER HARBOUR



1 While many of the game's main levels are meant to be approached with brute force, the puzzle-based Oyster Harbour stands out as a high point for players looking for something a little more cerebral.



2 The level opens with a quick spot of long-range shooting, followed by a frantic dash for the Ramdozer vehicle, which must be used to shunt crates of explosive onto a crane.



3 After using the TNT to remove a stubborn obstruction, there's a sliding-block puzzle to solve, and a series of barges that must be moved in the correct order. All against the tightest of time limits.



4 If there's a sequel, perhaps we'll see less of this type of challenge. Feedback suggested that most people preferred the mindless violence-based levels – which was, after all, the game's original concept.







A LIKELY STORY...

The game's plot (devised by Rare's website manager and 'father' of mascot Mr Pants) is tenuous, to say the very least – a team of elite demolition experts clearing a path for a missile truck that *can't slow down* and *must drive through the world's most densely populated areas*. Hmmm. But it could have been worse. "One of the ideas we nearly went with was that the driver of the nuclear carrier had a precariously balanced glass of Ribena in his cab and he didn't want to spill it over his new beige interior," says Rare. "Maybe we'll save that for the sequel..."

the carrier complete a more circuitous path around the levels, the team settled for concentrating the action in a narrow, straight line through the centre of each map. This way the player would be forced to flatten specific buildings, and the gameplay could be very tightly focused. Although the levels are generally quite large, with many branching areas to find, the game was designed to be explored at a more leisurely pace once the serious business of saving the carrier was completed.

With *Blast Corps*' basic mechanics in place almost from the beginning, the developers were able to add whatever their imaginations could conjure up. The huge range of vehicles is the most obvious indication of the time and freedom that Rare had, but it wasn't simply a case of dropping every tiny idea into the game. Rare's quality control meant that things such as giant robotic mantis and scorpion craft were dropped in favour of less spectacular, but more challenging, vehicles like the notorious Backlash truck – a dumpster with a very difficult sliding attack that didn't find favour with every *Blast Corps* player.

"Backlash was the vehicle that required the most skill to use," counters a team member, in defence of his creation. "Its attack was based on the powerslide in *Super Mario Kart*. I guess some people just couldn't be bothered to learn how to use it properly and consequently found it a bit frustrating."

Despite not achieving the kind of sales it deserved, *Blast Corps* stands out as one of the N64's more impressive titles. Released shortly after the machine's March 1997 UK launch, but with the kind of design innovation and technical expertise that very few coders outside Nintendo ever came close to equalling, it was the game that established Rare as the company few N64 fans (or magazines) could stop talking about. **NGC**

LEVEL TOUR: CARRICK POINT

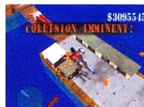


























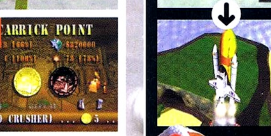








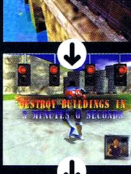




MAGIC MOMENT
SUNDAY DRIVER

One of the best things about the game is discovering new vehicles. Special levels, generally involving causing a specific amount of destruction against the clock, introduce the important ones, and others are lying around waiting to be discovered.



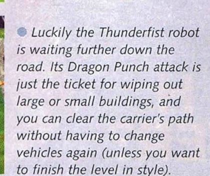






The first vehicle you get here is Sideswipe, a truck that looks like a futuristic petrol tanker, but contains a destructive surprise in its yellow trailer – a pair of battering rams that can flatten any buildings placed close to either side of it. But there's no way past the carrier on that narrow bridge…



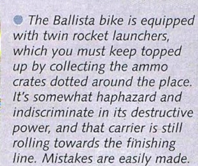
The solution is to take a detour around the side of the harbour, leaving the carrier to trundle across the bridge. There isn't a lot of time to spare before it hits the first obstacles on the other side, so a swift demolition job is called for as you race around to find something with a little more destructive ability.



Luckily the Thunderfist robot is waiting further down the road. Its Dragon Punch attack is just the ticket for wiping out large or small buildings, and you can clear the carrier's path without having to change vehicles again (unless you want to finish the level in style).



With the path to the end of the level fully cleared, you have a little extra time to find another vehicle and earn a few bonus points for demolishing some of the peripheral buildings. Of course, you could just get into the truck at the end, then return later to explore and/or wreak havoc at your leisure.



The Ballista bike is equipped with twin rocket launchers, which you must keep topped up by collecting the ammo crates dotted around the place. It's somewhat haphazard and indiscriminate in its destructive power, and that carrier is still rolling towards the finishing line. Mistakes are easily made.



After the carrier has completed its journey, the level ends and you're given the stats that tell you just how much mayhem you've caused, and how many secrets remain hidden. The only way to find them all is to return to the level, this time minus the carrier and any buildings you already wrecked.



TALES FROM THE SCRIPT

Are Nintendo games good enough for the movies? A leading Hollywood producer considers...

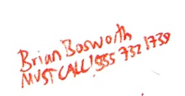
Let's get this straight: videogames don't need storylines. All you need to know before switching on your N64, Gamecube or Game Boy is which buttons do what, and whether the enemies need to be stomped on, raced against, or just shot square in the face with a gun the size of Norwich.

And yet a sizeable chunk of every game's budget goes straight to some man or woman whose sole job is to dream up a preposterous plot that 'explains' exactly why Mario is trapped in a multicoloured world full of talking bombs and flying turtles, or how a native American Indian has ended up in a land where stegosauruses have not only come back to life, but evolved the extraordinary ability to shoot laser-guided missiles out of side-mounted cannons.

So, we've taken three of the N64's most preposterous storylines and presented them as outlines for potential Hollywood blockbusters to Granger H Spudmeyer, one of Tinseltown's most bad-tempered producers. Here's what he made of them...

WHO IS GRANGER H SPUDMEYER?

For over 40 years, Mr Spudmeyer has been executively producing some of the best-loved and most critically criticised movies in celluloid history, including Terror At Seven Feet And Three Inches, There Goes That Mink!, and To Me, To You: The Chuckle Brothers Story. Granger H has cast his one good eye over many tens of thousands of movie scripts and plotlines over his long and extremely violent career – so who better to comment on some of the Nintendo world's most 'intriguing' storylines?



TUROK 3

You trying to clear the theatre, bud?!! A big bang's EXACTLY what we need to get the party pumping - think universal soldier, blow the audience outta their seats from the get go

nice line - can we get James Earl Jones for this voiceover? or Leslie Grantham?

ROAR.

What the..? omnipotent jellyfish! Why not a giant floating clam, for the love of Mary? Space-faring sea blobs are GUARANTEED COMMERCIAL SUICIDE, Man!

The universe was born not with a bang, but a scream. Long before the birth of our world, there was Oblivion. Feeding upon all it came into contact with, Oblivion drifted through the cosmos like a monstrous, omnipotent jellyfish. It consumed everything in its path, invading the bodies of the living and devouring them from the inside, feeding off the very energy of the dead and dying.

It gets worse!! How's this planet-sized jellyfish gonna invade an animal's body? On second thoughts, don't answer that.

The what was what? Did I miss something here?

When the Primagen's Lightship was destroyed, the explosion creating an energy surge that triggered a chain reaction so powerful that the universe as it existed was completely destroyed. The shockwave of energy unleashed by the explosion tore Oblivion apart like tissue paper, nearly destroying the most powerful being that had ever existed.

Nearly destroying? Hasn't the entire universe just bought the big one? This jellyfish guy's sure got some chutzpah!!

Kinda difficult to bring to the screen, buddy. The SFX boys are gonna go ape.

The instant that the Lost Land was born, Oblivion first felt pain... and fear... and hatred. Life often springs forth in the wake of death, and a new universe was born. Our universe.

Nice twist, but you've put it at the START of the movie, you dolt. Leave the surprises for the end. maybe have a giant T-rex invading New York - Sure-fire winner!!

How can it be lost if it's only just been created? Possible alternatives: Eden, Dinoland, Island C.

Oblivion survived, and now desperately seeks a way to punch through the Netherscape that separates our world from The Lost Land and countless others. The Lost Land holds the key to Oblivion's rebirth, and also the key to its destruction.

Netherscape? Is that near Belgium? HOW DO YOU PUNCH THROUGH A FREAKING COUNTRY?

Fine - except NONE OF THIS CRAP MAKES ANY DAMN SENSE. This stuff would give Stephen Hawking a migraine!!!

The last shreds of the pure energy source that created our world and nearly wiped out Oblivion are contained within the Light Burden that every member of the Turok lineage has carried.

Uh? How did this Turok guy get hold of it? And wouldn't it just burn a hole in his pocket?





The death of the Turok line will signal the beginning of the end... the rebirth of Oblivion.

355-1125775 "CANDY" SOURCE

THIS IS CRAP! and I made Buster with Phil Collins.

Call Don Simpson for crazy night out!! DEAD!

KOALAMAN

ALWAYS THE BRIDESMAID: THE JUDGE REINHOLD STORY

DONKEY KONG 64

CASTING COUCH AUDITIONS
1 00
2 25
3 15
4 17
5 30

So, what we got here is a baby alligator running around an oversized hamster wheel that steers a giant ship. Know any alligator trainers in LA? Jeez, animal rights are gonna have a field day with this.

"Left!" rasped a voice to his left. "Right!" came back the immediate response from the other side. The KlapTrap turning wheel found his little legs getting tired, and those two incompetent fools didn't have a clue where they were going.

Hilarious! Hire an orchestra for a cymbal crash here.

"Left!", "Right!" With the sudden sickening crunch of metal against rock, the King's pride and joy came to a shuddering halt, knocking all three off their feet.

The baby alligator TALKS?! We're gonna need a professional here - who did the voice of the mutt in Look Who's Talking Now?

The tough little KlapTrap was up first, dashing eagerly across to the broken bridge window to see what the goons had hit. "You two are going to be in so much trouble," he barked gleefully.

Someone tell the SFX guys not to take this stuff too literally...

But that pair weren't the only ones in trouble. Deep within the gloomy bowels of his latest creation,

King K. Rool? That's utter K. Rap, buddy. Need something EVIL: the Scalemaster, Archwizard of Lizards, King Bad. cast Dennis Hopper - he can can do evil reptile monarchs with his eyes shut. or glazed over.

a furious King K. Rool sat on his throne, glaring malevolently down upon the quaking generals of his vast Kremling army.

An island full of monkeys? Now you're talking my kinda language! Is the orange guy from Every Which Way But Loose still alive?

"Well? I'm still waiting for an answer..." It had taken years to build, but now his mighty island stronghold lay immobile off the coast of its very first target – Kong Isle.

Blast-o-Matic? Who's coming up with these names Vanilla Ice? No idea what the lizard guy's got against monkeys. still, nice work, leaves room for a money-spinning prequel. Episode I: The Phantom Men-ape?

Perhaps all was not lost, though... "Power up the Blast-O-Matic. Target is Kong Isle. Fire when ready!"

How about a deafening explosion instead?

But instead of a deafening explosion, there came only a sad whimper.

The King began to cry. "It's just not fair," he sobbed. "I really thought I was going to win this time." Klump waddled over. "Don't get all upset now, your excellency. We'll go and capture those nasty Kongs for you. Then we'll steal their Golden Bananas as usual so that if any Kongs escape us, they'll be too busy looking for them to come and ruin your magnificent plans."

Bada-bing!!!

Aw, man - is this another of those collect-the-bananas-to-open-the-doors-that-inexplicably-lead-straight-to-the-King's-lair jobs? MAKES NO SENSE!!

As King K. Rool watched his generals leave, he wiped away his crocodile tears,

and began to laugh. His little play acting had worked, and now these Kongs would soon be history.

Jumping Jehosaphat!! The King only gets his way because he blubbed? GUARANTEED COMMERCIAL SUICIDE. Better if he uses some kind of diabolical weapon. The Penetrate-o-Matic?

He glared down at his bemused technician. "Well, what are you waiting for? Get the Blast-O-Matic working. I've got an island to destroy."

This sucks.

STAR WARS EPISODE III: BUY MY TOYS!

$$$ $$$

ESCAPE FROM LEAMINGTON SPA

OPTICIANS 3.15



MARIO PARTY

Why are all those people leaving the theater? BECAUSE YOU'RE A FRICKING IDIOT, that's why! who wants to go to a Mario party? sounds like the kinda place you might meet Lassie and Beethoven - suggested new name: Mario's Gun Running Party

Those clueless philistines in Eng-land won't know what the hell 'gotten' means - We'll have to shoot two versions of this. On second thoughts, forget it - no hurry for a European release

What? Wario and Mario are mortal enemies, am I right? What next - Superman sharing a romantic candlelit dinner with Lex Luthor, for crying out loud? The evil guys should be GATECRASHING the party, chugging beer and looking up Peach's skirt. And give Wario an English accent.

Mario looked around and smiled. Throwing a party had been an excellent idea. It had been a long time since they had all gotten together.

All his friends were there: Luigi, Peach, Toad, Yoshi – even Wario and Donkey Kong.

I like where this is going... happy reunion, optimistic mood... tell me there's about to be a screen-shuddering bomb blast that mortally wounds Mario's friends, forcing him to take mindless, bloody revenge with big, big guns.

They laughed and talked about all the adventures they had shared together in the past. But what was there to do now?

The conversation turned to their dreams for the future.

Aw, crap.

What is this, The Care Bears Movie? Give everyone a different dream - Mario de-scaling the johns of the rich and famous, Donkey Kong starring in Every Which Way But Loose III, etc.

Amazingly, they all envisioned the same thing... to become a superstar upon whom everyone in the world could rely.

Then Wario asked, "Which one of us is the biggest superstar?" "I am!" "It's me!" they all shouted. The gang couldn't come to an agreement because they each wanted to be the best. They needed to prove once and for all who truly was number one.

The answer's Mario. The End.

Nice positive message for the kids - might have worked if Wario had ever been interested in helping anyone, dolt!! He'd be cramming his fist down Toad's smirking face quicker than you could say 'mama mia'.

Suddenly, Toad had an idea. "Isn't a superstar someone who helps others when they're in trouble?" Everyone realised he was right.

Then Toad told them about a Warp Pipe in Mushroom Village that could take you anywhere you wanted to go. Surely there were people on the other side of that pipe who needed their help?

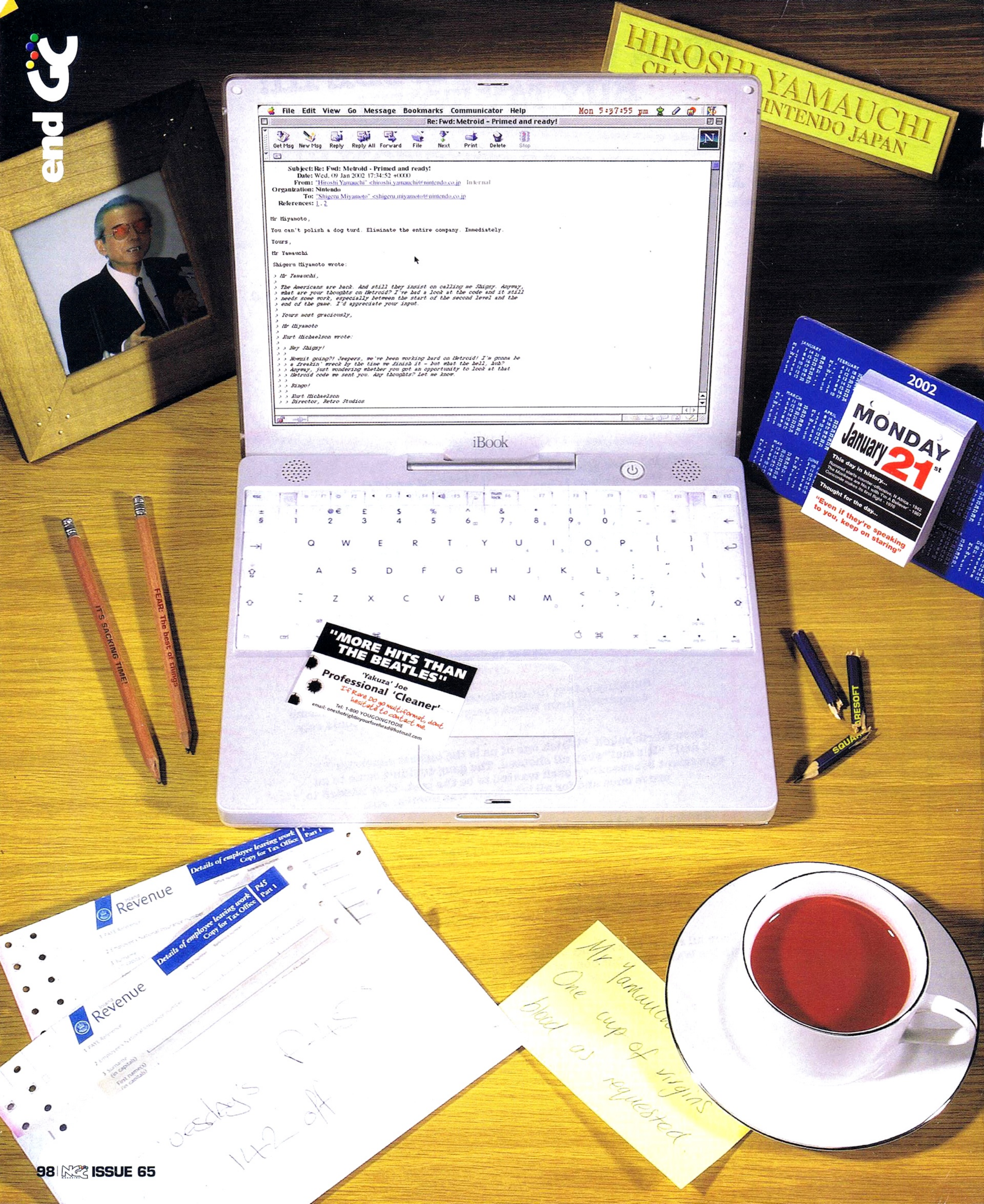
Call that a plot twist? You can stick it straight up your own warp pipe, buddy. Unless the people through that pipe need the kind of help that involves limb-shattering gunfights and car chases on the streets of San Francisco, you're looking at ZERO ASSES ON SEATS.

They all ran as fast as they could to Mushroom Village and jumped into the Warp Pipe. But none of them knew what exciting adventures awaited them on the other side...

I do - over 50 diverse multiplayer minigames, which has about as much to do with this story as the hairs on my pimply ass!! What are you, some kind of freaking COMMUNIST?!! Get out of my head - you people make me sick

LUNCH WITH THAT RICHIE CUNNINGHAM 4.15 — 5.30

LIST OF POTENTIAL KOALAMAN LEADS
~~John Candy~~ DEAD
~~Jim [illegible]~~ K-9!
Chris Farley DEAD
River Phoenix DEAD
Margot Kidder MAD?
Walter Matthau DEAD
~~Steve Guttenberg~~ [illegible]


HIROSHI YAMAUCHI
NINTENDO JAPAN
File Edit View Go Message Bookmarks Communicator Help Mon 5:37:55 pm
Re: Fwd: Metroid - Primed and ready!
Get Msg New Msg Reply Reply All Forward File Next Print Delete Stop
Subject: Re: Fwd: Metroid - Primed and ready!
Date: Wed, 09 Jan 2002 17:34:52 +0000
From: "Hiroshi Yamauchi" <hiroshi.yamauchi@nintendo.co.jp Internal
Organization: Nintendo
To: "Shigeru Miyamoto" <shigeru.miyamoto@nintendo.co.jp
References: 1 , 2
Mr Miyamoto,
You can't polish a dog turd. Eliminate the entire company. Immediately.
Yours,
Mr Yamauchi
Shigeru Miyamoto wrote:
> Mr Yamauchi,
> The Americans are back. And still they insist on calling me Shigsy. Anyway, what are your thoughts on Metroid? I've had a look at the code and it still needs some work, especially between the start of the second level and the end of the game. I'd appreciate your input.
> Yours most graciously,
> Mr Hiyamoto
> Kurt Michaelson wrote:
> > Hey Shigsy!
> > Howzit going?! Jeepers, we've been working hard on Metroid! I'm gonna be a freakin' wreck by the time we finish it - but what the hell, huh? Anyway, just wondering whether you got an opportunity to look at that Metroid code we sent you. Any thoughts? Let me know.
> > Ringo!
> > Kurt Michaelson
> > Director, Retro Studios
iBook
2002
MONDAY
January 21st
This day in history...
Rommel starts counter-offensive, N Africa - 1942
The Monkees are No.1 with 'I'm A Believer' - 1967
Concorde makes its first flight - 1976
Thought for the day...
"Even if they're speaking to you, keep on staring"
IT'S SACKING TIME!
FEAR: The best of things
SQUARESOFT
"MORE HITS THAN THE BEATLES"
'Yakuza' Joe
Professional 'Cleaner'
If Rare DO go multiformat, dont hesitate to contact me.
Tel: 1-800 YOUGOINGTODIE
email: oneshotrightinyourforehead@hotmail.com
Revenue
Details of employee leaving work
Copy for Tax Office
P45 Part 1
Mr. Yamauchi
One cup of virgins blood as requested

Ringtones 09069 182299

Hottest Tones

Addicted To Bass - Puretone	111636
Crazy Rap - Afroman	111631
Blow Your Whistle - DJ Alligator	111567
More Than A Woman - Aaliyah	111626
Am to Pm - Christina Milian	111635
Somethin Stupid - Robbie Williams	111556
Gotta Get Through - Daniel Bedingfield	111545
Haterz - So Solid Crew	111574
Bad Intentions - Dr Dre	111620
Its Love - GoldTrix	111637
Girls Girls Girls - Jay Z	111634
On The Radio - Nelly Furtado	111627
My Sweet Lord - George Harrison	111628
Drifting Away - Lange	111638
Diddy - P Diddy	111629
Overprotected - Britney Spears	111630
Points Of Authority - Linkin Park	111621
Can't Get You Out Of My Head - Kylie	111388
Blow Your Whistle - DJ Alligator	111567
Will I - Ian Van Dahl	111547
You Can't Change Me - Roger Sanchez	111573
Catch - Kosheen	111598
Handbags And Gladrags - Stereophonics	111599
Lately - Samantha Mumba	111619
Words Are Not Enough - Steps	111600
Murder On The - Sophie Ellis Bextor	111594
Because I Got - High Afroman	111454
Hey Baby (Uhh, Ahh) - DJ Otzi	111446
They Don't Know - So Solid Crew	111519
Country Road - Hermes House Band	111571
Crying At The Discotheque - Alcathazar	111586
Got You - Pharaoh Monche	111587
Who Do You Love - Riva/Danni Minogue	111554
Over The Rainbow - Cliff Richard	111570
Have You Ever - S Club 7	111543
You Are - Atomic Kitten	111542
Resurrection - PPK	111550
Rapture - iio	111491
Do Wah Diddy - DJ Otzi	111564
Fight Music - D12	111504
Where's Your Head At? - Basement Jaxx	111503
One Night Stand - Mis-teeq	111498
Smooth Criminal - Alien Ant Farm	111377
Calling - Geri Halliwell	111568
Everybody - Hearsay	111566
What If - Kate Winslett	111565
Bad Boy 4 Life - P Diddy	111394
Walk On - U2	111563
Party Hard - Andrew WK	111561
Hit Em Up - Blu Cantrell	111560
In Too Deep - Sum 41	111559
Paid My Dues - Anastacia	111555
Outside - Staind	111551
Free - Lighthouse Family	111546
Dance And Shout - Shaggy	111544
Emotion - Destiny's Child	111541
If You Come Back - Blue	111539
Queen Of My Heart - Westlife	111518
The Music's No Good Without You - Cher	111517
I'm Real - J-LO	111514
Bohemian Like You - Dandy Warhols	111513
Fallin - Aalicia Keys	111511
Don't Need the Sun To Shine- Gabrielle	111506
Closer To Me - Five	111505
Im A Slave 4 U - Britney Spears	111497
You Got It Bad - Usher	111490
In The End - Linkin Park	111489
Flawless - The Ones	111488
Side - Travis	111486
First Date - Blink 182	111485
Smash Something - Redman	111478
Stop On My Old Size 9's - Stereophonics	111477
Push The Tempo - Fatboy Slim	111471
Oh No - So Solid Crew	111469
Fat Lip - Sum 41	111468
Family Affair - Mary J Blige	111462
Thinking It Over - Liberty	111461

Chart Hits

Say My Name - Destinys Child	111113	Too Close - Blue	111380
Angel - Shaggy	111114	Stuck In The Middle - Louise	111383
Its Raining Men - Geri	111117	Take My Breath - Emma Bunton	111384
It Wasn't Me - Shaggy	111118	Electric Avenue - Eddie Grant	111187
Play - J-LO	111122	Thong Song - Sisqo	111190
Lady Marmalade - Christina Aguilera	111123	I Try - Macy Gray	111192
Bills Bills Bills - Destinys Child	111135	Its Gonna Be Me - NSYNC	111194
Jumpin - Destinys Child	111136	If I Let You Go - Westlife	111196
Pure Shores - All Saints	111156	Every Morning - Sugar Ray	111201
Rock DJ - Robbie Williams	111160	Bootylicious - Destiny's Child	111214
American Pie - Madonna	111163	Butterfly - Crazy Town	111216

Nintendo PRIZE

Win a Nokia 8310



Ultra modern features include: Wap; fm radio and voice facilities, all packed into an amazing tiny body.

09069 181826 INSTANT WIN

Don't Let Me Be - Britney Spears	111165	Thank You - Dido	111224
Under The Bridge - All Saints	111175	19-2000 - Gorillaz	111228
When You Say Nothing - Ronan	111177	Show Me the Way - Hearsay	111229
Whole Again - Atomic Kitten	111183	Survivor - Destinys Child	111242
Clint Eastwood - Gorillaz	111184	Eternal Flame - Atomic Kitten	111256
Pure and Simple - Hearsay	111185	No Matter What - Boyzone	111263
Teenage Dirtbag - Wheatus	111186	If You had My Love - J-Lo	111265
Ain't It Funny - J-LO	111282	Eternity - Robbie Williams	111267
All Rise - Blue	111293	Perfect Gentleman - Wyclef Jean	111268
Don't Stop Moving - S Club 7	111294	Heaven Is A Halfpipe - OPM	111269
Dancing in the Moonlight - Toploader	111306	Pop - Nsync	111273
Someone To Call My - Janet Jackson	111308	Lets Get Loud - J-LO	111274
Breathless- The Corrs	111318	Let Me Be Your - Robbie Williams	111277
Runaway-The Corrs	111319	Lets Dance - Five	111281
Beautiful Day - U2	111320	Mambo No.5 - Bob The Builder	111389
Stuck In A Moment - U2	111321	Rock My World - Michael Jackson	111393
Babylon David Gray	111324	Chain Reaction - Steps	111421
		Baby Come On Over - Sam Mumba	111444

Nintendo PRIZE

Win £150 worth of games

For the console of your choice!

INSTANT WIN

09069 181829

Flying Without Wings - Westlife	111325
If I Let You Go - Westlife	111326
Always Come Back - Sam Mumba	111328
Gotta Tell You Samantha Mumba	111329
Fill Me In - Craig David	111332
Seven Days - Craig David	111333
Walking Away - Craig David	111334
Scream If You Wanna - Geri Halliwell	111338
All Or Nothing O Town	111339
Who Let The Dogs Out - Baha Men	111347
Flying Without Wings - Westlife	111325
If I Let You Go - Westlife	111326
Always Come Back - Sam Mumba	111328
Gotta Tell You Samantha Mumba	111329
Fill Me In - Craig David	111332
Seven Days - Craig David	111333
Walking Away - Craig David	111334
Scream If You Wanna - Geri Halliwell	111338
All Or Nothing O Town	111339
Who Let The Dogs Out - Baha Men	111347
Little Respect - Wheatus	111358

Themes

Mission Impossible	111121
Only Fools And Horses	111369
Harry Potter	111548
Winnie The Pooh	111613
The A Team	111115
James Bond	111119
The Good, The Bad & The Ugly	111181
Muppets	111134
Benny Hill	111139
Rocky	111141
Scooby Doo	111142
633 Squadron	111608
Blackadder	111609
Formula One	111610
Red Dwarf	111611
Fawlty Towers	111448
Ghostbusters	111455
Captain Scarlett	111605
Monty Python	111496
Rainbow Theme	111562
Axel F Beverley Hills Cop	111601
The Terminator	111602
Batman	111606
Pinky And The Brain	111607
Battlestar Galactica	111464
Hawaii 5-0	111604
Blind Date	111482
Indiana Jones	111466
Star Wars - Cantina Theme	111124
Star Wars - Main Theme	111125
The Flintstones	111465
Superman	111143
Match of the Day	111126
Knight Rider	111127
Popeye	111129
Postman Pat	111131
The Simpsons	111132
Pink Panther	111133
South Park	111144
Looney Tunes	111151
Friends	111152
Charlies Angels	111153
Dirty Dancing	111249
Inspector Gadget	111251

Nintendo PRIZE

Win a laptop computer

Comes with 56K Modem!

09069 182283 INSTANT WIN

No Good 4 Me - So Solid Crew	111368	Transformers	111253
Take Me Home - Sophie Ellis Bextor	111374	Austin Powers	111255
Little L - Jamiroquai	111375	Thunderbirds	111279
Turn Off The Light - Nelly Furtado	111378	Big Brother	111342
		Uncle Song - South Park Movie	111344

Ringtone Compatibility - Nokia: 3210, 3310, 3330, 5510, 61xx, 62xx, 8210, 8110i, 88xx, 7110, and the 9xxx. Sagem: MC930, MC/MW932, MC936, MC/MW939, MC940, MC942, MC946, MC949 MC950, MC952, MC956 & MC959(r) Motorola: T250, V50, V100, V8088 & Timeport 260

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09069 181824

Picture Messages 09069 182298

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Logos 09069 182294

131205	131477	131157	131441	131396
131482	131182	131200	131107	131116
131483	131141	131111	131223	131240

Logo Maker 09063 657018

[Do It Yourself]

Just call - key it in - pick your graphic and it will usually be with you immediately!*



NOKIA I♥MICHELLE

BETH DAVID LOUISE

GRAPHICS NUMBERS

732	729	728	748	769	742	751	759	767	731	736	725
760	721	730	747	761	723	744	756	745	735	770	749

New Features

Your number as a logo or Restore your original operator logo

*May take up to 24hrs. Use any alpha-numeric telephone. Number of characters may be limited and fonts may vary.

Compatibility - Nokia: 3210, 3310, 3330, 5110, 5190, 5510, 6110, 6130, 6150, 6190, 7110, 8810, 8210, 8850, 8890, and 9110(i) can receive graphics. 5110, 7110 & 8310 cannot receive picture messages

Calls cost £3. Ask permission from the bill-payer. Mobile charges vary.

Most services require a tone phone. INSTANT WIN competitions have questions and a game to decide if you are a winner. Other competitions involve questions with tiebreaker and end on the 28th February 2002 (unless otherwise indicated), after which they may be replaced by a similar service. Actual designs may vary. Fanz may use data to make offers to you. If you DO NOT wish this write or visit website. For rules or winners' names, see our web site or send a SAE. If you win an INSTANT prize visit www.fanz.co.uk OR send your claim to: www.fanz.co.uk, PO Box 28 Northampton NN1 5DS. Helpline: 0871 872 0404 (UK) 1850 928228(Ireland). Winners Line 0871 872 0411.

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